

January/February 1973

FINANCING PUBLIC TV • WILBUR SCHRAMM, LYLE NELSON

**COLUMBIA**

# **JOURNALISM REVIEW**

AMERICA'S MEDIA MONITOR  
PRESS • RADIO • TV

# **ELECTION '72 COVERAGE HOW FAIR?**

**A national monitor of the news media . . .**

**. . . to assess the performance of journalism in all its forms, to call attention to its shortcomings and strengths, and to help define—or redefine—standards of honest, responsible service . . .**

**. . . to help stimulate continuing improvement in the profession and to speak out for what is right, fair, and decent.**

**—'Columbia Journalism Review,'  
Fall, 1961.**

FIRST CLASS  
PERMIT No. 22712  
NEW YORK, N. Y.

**BUSINESS REPLY MAIL** No Postage Stamp Necessary If Mailed in the United States

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY

**COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW**

700 Journalism • Columbia University  
New York, N. Y. 10027

HOW  
WELL  
INFORMED  
ARE YOU?



We should be the best informed people in the world. Our national wealth and technology make possible communications miracles. Yet America's news media aren't good enough. Where do they fall short? How can they be improved? COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW will help you become better informed about these and related issues.

Get a copy FREE by filling out this card.

Send me the next issue of

**COLUMBIA  
JOURNALISM  
REVIEW**

☐ 1 year (6 issues) \$9      ☐ 2 years (12 issues) \$16  
☐ 3 years (18 issues) \$22

Name

Address

City

State  Zip

☐ Payment enclosed    ☐ Bill me



# COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

January/February, 1973

cover: Bob Cato

*Columbia Journalism Review* is published bimonthly under auspices of the faculty, alumni, and friends of the Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University.

Dean and editorial chairman: Elie Abel.

Editor: Alfred Balk.

Contributing Editor: James Boylan.

National Correspondent: Ben H. Bagdikian.

Art director: Burton Wenk. Circulation manager: William Granberg. Circulation consultant: S. O. Shapiro. Subscription assistant: William F. Billings. Assistant to the editor: Jocelyn Bloomfield. Research associate: Daniel J. Leab.

Board of advisory editors: Edward W. Barrett (chairman), Richard T. Baker, W. Phillips Davison, Fred W. Friendly, Norman E. Isaacs, Luther P. Jackson, Penn T. Kimball, John M. Patterson, Donald Shanor, Louis M. Starr, Frederick T. C. Yu.

Chairman, publishing committee: Louis G. Cowan.

Vol. XI, No. 5, Jan./Feb., 1973. Editorial and business offices: 700 Journalism Building, Columbia University, New York, N.Y. 10027. © 1973 Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University. Printed by Vermont Printing Co., Brattleboro, Vt. 05301. U.S. national newsstand distribution by Eastern News Distributors, Inc., 155 W. 15th St., New York, N.Y. 10011.

Subscription rates: \$9.00 a year. Single copy by mail: \$1.75. Add \$1 a year for subscriptions going outside the U.S. and U.S. possessions.

Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing office. No claims for missed back copies honored after one year.

POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to Columbia Journalism Review, 700 Journalism Building, Columbia University, New York, N.Y. 10027.

## Articles

- 9 Election coverage '72-1: The fruits of Agnewism  
Ben H. Bagdikian
- 24 Election coverage '72-2: The trials of a one-candidate campaign  
Jules Witcover
- 29 Election coverage '72-3: Were polls overemphasized?  
Stephen Isaacs
- 43 The FCC's nonbattle against media monopoly  
Stephen R. Barnett

- 51 China: casting off the myths  
Norman E. Isaacs

## Additional special reports:

Theo Lippman, Jr. (page 14); Gerald S. Nagel (page 16); Edwin Diamond (page 22)

## Special Supplement

- 31 Financing public TV  
Wilbur Schramm, Lyle Nelson

## Departments

- 2 Passing comment
- 58 Notes on the art  
Newspaper offices: off-limits to police searches. Frederick Mann,  
Felicity Barringer  
The most neglected page? Alfred Stanford
- 61 Books  
James Boylan, Daniel J. Leab
- 65 Unfinished business
- 68 Report on reports. Daniel J. Leab  
the lower case (inside back cover)  
Second reading. Wes Gallagher (back cover)

## Passing comment

### The taste of ashes

The national campaign—at its heart, the pursuit of the presidency—has in the past offered a clash of principles, a conflict of issues whose resolution in the vote brings to the country a sense of completion. Or is that merely the way we like to remember the past? In any case, it seems certain that the 1972 campaign brought no such resolution of issues, for there was little joining of combat. On the one hand, there was a candidate who outdid all predecessors since McKinley in refusing to submit himself to the electorate or his opponent; on the other, a candidate who failed to develop a roster of issues beyond their most primitive forms.

What role was left to the news media in this situation? Journalists scarcely could fabricate a debate where none existed, nor make the political system function when it was bent on malfunctioning. To be sure, there were moments of illumination—the Carl Bernstein-Bob Woodward revelations of political sabotage in the *Washington Post*, the *CBS Evening News* “mini-documentaries” on Watergate and the implications of the wheat deal with Russia; scrutiny of campaign spending by Morton Mintz of the *Post* and others. But much political coverage in 1972 was characterized by a reluctance to commit resources, to make extraordinary effort. One finds the words “fatigued” or “tired” coming to mind.

Truly there does seem to be weariness or jadedness in some of the larger themes of campaign coverage: the obsession with stories about the Mc-

Govern staff, evidently obtained more through leakage than enterprise; the reliance upon reports of polls instead of other forms of reportage on public opinion; the quick foreclosure of the election almost at the stroke of midnight on Nov. 7.

Some political scientists see this era as one of changing party alignment, a shift in the bases of electoral support and an alteration in the agenda of politics. Just as tariff and business politics dominated the old Republican era, and welfare issues the New Deal period and after, so a new set of political themes may be emerging. But few of those who describe American politics in the news media appeared in 1972 to be in pursuit of these signs of change. Politics is always *about* something. If the media are not going to help formulate the political agenda for our society, they may in the long run have no serious function at all.

### Polls as news

Daniel Boorstin defined a celebrity as a human pseudo-event, a person who is well known for his well-knownness. Similarly, a pre-election poll is an electoral pseudo-event, showing who is ahead by his aheadness. The issue in the main is not the accuracy, authenticity, or the credibility of such polls; they have long since recovered from missteps of earlier years—and indeed had a banner year in 1972 [see page 29]. The issue is their qualification as news of public importance.

Every major story about a poll becomes part of the flow of information on a campaign. In theory, it is a form of reporting on the electorate; in fact, it is a kind of handicapping sheet, telling voters whether they are with the potential majority, telling potential contributors whether they may be backing a losing horse, telling politicians whether to become shriller or mellower. Poll reporting is devoted almost obsessively to the size of the lead and the probability of the outcome; to paraphrase Vince Lombardi, winning doesn't become everything, it becomes the only thing. To the extent that poll news displaced other forms of reportage in 1972, it may share part of the blame for the desiccated nature of the campaign.

## The neglected results

By comparison with news of polls, which give the odds, the voting statistics are the real thing, the cumulative decision of all the voters; where a poll can offer at most a few thousand bits of information, the vote yields, nationally, millions of bits, available within hours. Yet it is curious to see the relatively casual treatment news media give this windfall, disregarding the wealth of clues to the meanings of an election that lie in those figures.

Over the past twenty or thirty years, political scientists—of whom V. O. Key, Jr., was the best known—have developed ingenious but readily understandable ways to make voting statistics yield information on political coalitions, on party alignments, on intensity of support of candidates among segments of the electorate. Example: on election night, John Chancellor asserted confidently on NBC that much of the Nixon majority represented a shift from the 1968 Wallace vote. To say the least, this is a hypothesis worth study, but no reporter who has come to this publication's attention has actually gone to voting districts and tried to find proof.

Another example: *Time* asserted [Nov. 20] that Nixon's victory had "splintered" the New Deal coalition of minorities, and did cite a scattering of precinct returns to support its contention. But it reached back only to 1968, whereas a large organization should not find it beyond its grasp to determine whether in fact the Democratic coalition in 1968 was still Roosevelt's, and what stage 1972 represented in its evolution or dissolution over four decades. The possibilities are great. By halting the story of the election as soon as the counting stops, news media are discarding what is perhaps their best opportunity for reporting on the whole electorate.

## Four more—of the same?

The truce with the press declared by the Nixon Administration never turned out to be all it was supposed to be, and it quickly broke down in ad-

verse circumstances, such as the *Washington Post's* assiduous coverage of political spy operations. That the official leaners-on-the-media had not lost their touch through lack of practice was evident when, for example, the White House sent a tendentious question to ABC to be asked of Sen. McGovern on the air, and ABC—which must have been woefully short of questions—complied; when the White House called NBC to complain about what its correspondent, Cassie Mackin, had said about the President; when, after the election, Charles Colson of the White House staff, at an editors' meeting, intemperately accused CBS and the *Post* of "McCarthyism"—for a Republican, a paradoxical choice of terms, to say the least; and when the President decided to favor the *Washington Star-News* with an exclusive interview, largely to burn the *Post*.

Whatever other mandates it has inferred, the Nixon Administration seems to have taken the election returns as an order to resume beating the media—or at least that minority that persisted in raining on the victory parade. If the scattered clues of the post-election weeks mean anything, the next term's pressures on the news media to get in step may make the first four years seem like a honeymoon.

## In the trenches

One of the most active lines of battle in the next few years will be that taking shape around the infantrymen of journalism, the reporters, over the right to confidentiality of sources. From all appearances, it will be a long and perhaps discouraging contest. As the new Congress prepared to convene, chances for a strong federal shield law were rated no better than 50-50 by its supporters. And the lengthening list of journalists jailed or threatened with jail—a roster headed by Peter Bridge of Newark and William I. Farr of Los Angeles—lends increasing weight to the belief that the cautious wording of the *Caldwell* decision meant little—that its effects may prove disastrous to the press in reporting on subjects of

sensitivity to the Government. The resistance is organizing among individuals and professional groups; it is none too soon.

## Two notes on endorsements

1. Our Nov./Dec. issue asked whether *Newsday's* new policy of nonendorsement of candidates would not produce lessened visibility for candidates for secondary offices. An inspection of *Newsday* for October and early November shows that the paper provided generous space for local candidates to state their positions, and itself offered discussions of issues on the editorial page. Yet there is still reason to doubt that these compensated for a reasoned argument on the merits of candidates. After competitors state their positions, is there still not a need for a third voice to sum up?

2. Some newspaper chains, such as Scripps-Howard, have usually handled presidential endorsements by ukase. That is, the head of the organization decides which candidate all the newspapers will support and even directs them to use a centrally written editorial. The Cox newspapers have been an exception, until 1972, when James M. Cox, Jr., ordered the group to support Nixon. The directive had two untoward consequences: It brought about the resignation of Gregory E. Favre, editor of the chain's West Palm Beach paper; and it led the Atlanta *Constitution* editors to engage in a charade of discussing the paper's endorsement on public television when, in fact, the decision in substance had already been made.

The Knight Newspapers were a refreshing contrast: they went their own ways, while John S. Knight himself, offended by both candidates, explained his position in his own column. His home paper, the Akron *Beacon Journal*, endorsed Nixon but provided, as it had in 1968, room for a dissenting opinion from a nonconcurring editor. (Similarly, William Block of the Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette* allotted more than equal space to an editorial dissent from the official choice, Nixon.)

## A national council is born

A full quarter-century ago, the Commission on Freedom of the Press (Hutchins Commission) called for "the establishment of a new and independent agency to appraise and report annually upon the performance of the press." No such "new and independent agency" on a national basis has come into existence, but it appears that a reasonable facsimile may be imminent in the form of the "independent and private national news council" now being gestated by the Twentieth Century Fund.

The plan is a product of a "task force"—fourteen persons, nine of them connected with news media, including, in unofficial capacities, persons from CBS News, the New York *Times*, the Washington *Post*, the Public Broadcasting Service, and the Louisville *Courier-Journal*. Their prospectus, issued in December, 1972, relies on the precedent of earlier councils established in Britain, Canada, in a scattering of American cities on a trial basis, and in Minnesota. Wisely, the plan disavows any intent to embrace the entirety of American Journalism; instead, it would concentrate on the principal national suppliers of news—wire services, newspaper-related supplementary services, national syndicates, broadcast networks including public TV, and newsmagazines. Like the British council, the membership would have a nonmedia majority and the media representatives may not be connected with the national suppliers under scrutiny. The council would not have, or seek, powers beyond those of publicity.

Thus, the skeleton. But what of the council's work? The prospectus lists two major objectives: "enhancing the credibility of the media" and "protecting their freedom of expression." To gain these goals, the council will be obligated "to receive, to examine, and to report on complaints concerning the accuracy and fairness of news reporting in the United States" and "to initiate studies and report on the issues involving freedom of the press."

At first sight, this appears to be a rather sketchy charter, promising basically to do no more than to protect the media's rights and to improve their



public relations by handling complaints. Clearly, the impact of the national council will be determined not by its constitution but by its implementation—the selection of members, the breadth and honesty of its complaint procedures, its enterprise in taking up even inconvenient or embarrassing free-press cases. As its character becomes clearer, the council will be examined further in these pages.

## As 'Life' ends

It was an America of fewer pictures to which Henry R. Luce unveiled *Life* in 1936. Newspaper photographs, then as now, were few and coarse; pictures over the air were still experimental. *Life* offered the nation striking photography in quantity, and the country responded; *Life* prospered. Now the appetite has been dulled in a picture-sated age of television, and as 1972 ended *Life* was publishing its final issue. Certainly, *Life* closed for all the reasons that have killed other mass magazines—competition from TV and specialized magazines, inability to deliver a specific audience to advertisers, rises in postal costs. But *Life* had also lost its *raison d'être*. Even with its important investigative journalism, *Life* remained a vehicle for photojournalism. When this offering was no longer unique, *Life* was doomed.

It is characteristic of the new age that even before *Life* ended, Time, Inc., began its first new magazine since the Fifties: *Money*. Perhaps the country needed *Life* more than *Money*, but *Money* is what it will get.

## Sidelines

Last Oct. 26, *Newsday* published the results of an investigation rather unusual in character for a newspaper—the revelation of the presence of news people on Long Island political payrolls. The survey, done with the assistance of a computer, found a good many past abuses (such as the acceptance of money by a former *Newsday* edi-

tor to push pictures of Republicans), but a decline in current moonlighting. Only two newsmen—one from the *New York News*, one from the *Long Island Press*—were identified as receiving pay for government-agency work. Sixteen others had held government or political jobs in the past ten years, and seven of the total of eighteen had handled news about their secondary employers. In half of the cases, moreover, the newspaper had no knowledge of the second job.

Associated Press uncovered a similar phenomenon in Massachusetts: the employment by state agencies of staff members of the State House News Service, which supplies material to all Massachusetts news media. A. A. Michelson, writing in the *Boston Globe* of Oct. 21, noted as well that all media represented in the Statehouse receive free space, desks, and telephone service.

Such exposures may reveal an increasing concern among news organizations about reducing their vulnerability to charges of hidden influence and petty corruption. A report issued by the professional standards committee of the Associated Press Managing Editors Assn. is particularly timely in this context. It reveals the standards on conflict of interest and acceptance of favors to which editors publicly commit their papers. Of 910 papers polled, 229—possibly the least vulnerable segment—filled out the rather complicated questionnaires.

One major section of the report, which was released in November, dealt with "outside activities"—the kind of situation described in the *Newsday* investigation, as well as other forms of off-hours work. Most moonlighting, it appeared, was done by staff members of large papers; as a consequence, a good share of such papers (44 per cent) had written rules on the subject, and these codes were published with the report. These seem to be the consensus standards:

—Some forms of moonlighting are preferred to others, teaching being the most acceptable.

—Freelance work is permitted, but not for outlets defined as competitive with the employer.

—The paper considers itself the sole owner of work originally done for it.

—Few papers view staff members' investments

as a potential problem and few have made rules on the subject.

—Community, civic, and charitable work is permitted, so long as the staff member doesn't cover or edit stories dealing with the group; and it is preferred that he remain anonymous.

—More papers permit than forbid political and ideological activity, but more forbid than permit the holding of public office. Curiously, a few would permit a staff member to hold public office while forbidding political activity.

Many of the comments by individual editors indicated a trend toward laissez-faire on journalists in volunteer politics. One said: "For the first twenty-five years I was in the newspaper business I felt that a strict neutrality policy was best. Today I'm not so sure." Read in conjunction with *Newsday's* study, such attitudes are a hint that the era of doing political chores on the sly may be ending and that cause-type activity by journalists will be more open, as well as more extensive. No doubt this will create a public relations problem for the media (as in the Geraldo Rivera-ABC case in 1972), but this will not negate the advantages of openness.

The questionnaire did not take up the key question of necessity—the reason many newspaper people feel obliged to hold second jobs. Nor did the survey touch on the levels of pay that might eliminate hardship as a cause of moonlighting.

The other major section of the APME report deals with "freebies"—the variety of gifts and privileges extended by those desiring the favor of the press. The responses may cast more light on newspaper folkways, past and present, than policy guidance. For what they are worth, here are the prevailing opinions.

#### IT IS NOT ALL RIGHT:

—To accept advertisements on condition that a staff member write a story about the advertiser (although 10 per cent-plus, surprisingly, indicated the contrary).

—For travel and outdoor editors to accept free or cut-rate lodging.

—For a night-club or restaurant reviewer to accept complimentary drinks or meals.

—For staff members to play at local golf clubs at special cut rates.

—For women's-department writers to accept clothing or other purchases at discount prices.

—For newspapers to accept transportation or other expenses from political candidates on campaign tours.

#### IT IS ALL RIGHT:

—To accept free passage on a flight sponsored by a state or military agency.

—To accept gifts—e.g. Christmas gifts—but sometimes with limits of \$2.50 to \$25.

—To keep complimentary books and records, although they may not go to reviewers.

—To accept free tickets for "one- or two-night events," especially for such an occasion as a movie showing for prominent people in the community.

#### IT MAY BE ALL RIGHT (split verdicts):

—To send a reporter free of charge on a flight to an event paid for by a private business.

—To let a reporter accept a free trip overseas paid for by a business or a foreign government.

—To let reporters serve as scorers, sometimes with pay, at sports events.

—To accept free or discount season tickets for college or professional sports. (One paper was startled to discover that its staff members were receiving more than \$3,000 worth of such tickets.)

All of these opinions, it should be remembered, are from editors relatively high in their organizations. What they set out as the permissible limits may or may not be observed at the lower echelons. Still, with some glaring exceptions, the responses show decent impulses, and it is part of the history of journalism in this country that public enunciation of noble purposes tends eventually to force the enunciators to deliver on them.

## Philadelphia: the silencers

Just as the America of Richard Nixon may be an increasingly uncomfortable place for journalists, so it is in the Philadelphia of Mayor Frank Rizzo.



And just as the President himself has not engaged, in recent years, in the hectoring of news people, so the Mayor himself was not clearly involved in two recent incidents. But a shadow was there.

One case was the removal of Taylor Grant, a commentator on WPEN, because his sponsor had dropped him. Grant had often been critical of the Mayor, but his Sept. 23 broadcast happened to catch the ear of a member of the Rizzo Administration, who complained to the sponsor, the Philadelphia Gas Works, a city-owned company operated by a private contractor. The sponsor cut Grant's contract two months short. WPEN, in time-honored fashion, offered Grant the "alternative" of continuing unsponsored at an 80-per-cent reduction in pay. Grant declined, and the Mayor's most vocal critic fell silent.

Possibly more ominous, because of its Kafka-style overtones, was what happened to Greg Walter, the writer of the famed article on Rizzo that *Philadelphia* magazine declined to print during the mayoralty campaign [PASSING COMMENT, Jan./Feb. 1972]. This past year Walter, as a reporter for the *Bulletin*, was investigating corruption in the police department, Rizzo's old domain. In May, he was charged with taping his own telephone conversations without permission of the other party—the first time, to all appearances, that anybody had been charged with such an offense in Philadelphia. Walter found out that a basis for the prosecution was a set of tapes of his conversations mysteriously in the hands of the District Attorney. Walter was convicted, fined \$350, and appealed. In the meantime, the charges ended Walter's investigation, and he was placed on leave from the *Bulletin* for the rest of his one-year contract.

Two critics of the regime in Philadelphia have been silenced. Who will have the temerity to take their places?

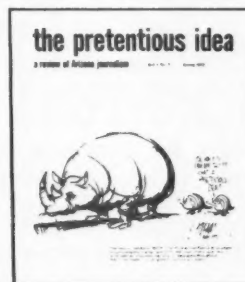
## Monitors

Only months after Australia [see PASSING COMMENT, Sept./Oct.], Malaysia has spawned a journalism review. Its name is *Leader: Malaysian*



*Journalism Review*, and it is published quarterly in English. Crisp in appearance and presentation, the magazine publishes a dozen or so articles in each issue. Rates: \$2 an issue or \$8 a year (U.S.). Address: South East Asia Press Centre, 57 Third Mile, Klang Road, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

A new journalism review, unusual in that it is based in a journalism school, has appeared in Arizona. *The Pretentious Idea* gained its title from a comment by a newspaper editor: "What you intend to do is a bit pretentious." A student editorial staff produces *TPI*; no subscriptions are offered, but requests to be placed on the mailing list can be sent to: Department of Journalism, University of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz. 85721.



Chicago's public TV channel, WTTW, has initiated a half-hour weekly media review called *Behind the Deadline*. If it lasts, the new program may help fill the gap left by the lapse of *WBBM-TV Views the Press*, which ran through much of the 1960s.

## Look at it this way . . .

From an interview with Lloyd Wendt, editor and publisher of *Chicago Today*, the afternoon daily

owned by the Tribune Co., in *Advertising Age* [Sept. 18, 1972]:

... there are "no plans" to curtail the Saturday and Sunday editions, which, he said, "come closer to breaking even than the daily editions. What's the sense of knocking them off if they're paying their own way?" he said.

From a story in *Editor & Publisher* [Oct. 7, 1972], on the dropping of Saturday and Sunday editions by *Chicago Today*:

"Look at it this way," said publisher Lloyd Wendt, "*Chicago Today's* Sunday newspaper was up against two long-established Sundays . . . and there were generally production bottlenecks as the craftsmen rushed to get out two Sunday newspapers at virtually the same time."

## For the record

Norman Cherniss, the Riverside, Calif., editor who did a fandango with the *New Republic* Syndicate over rights to Ralph Nader's column [see PASSING COMMENT, Sept./Oct.] finally received the last word from the syndicate. The *Los Angeles Times*, which held exclusive rights to the Nader column for three months, never printed it and, on July 1, relinquished it. The syndicate wrote to Cherniss: "We are now able to offer the column to other newspapers in the LA area. You will receive an exclusive for your area, but narrowly defined." Cherniss, who has fought exclusivity for years, observes, "For what I consider obvious reasons, I never responded."

## Darts and laurels

*Laurel*: to the New Jersey Coalition for Fair Broadcasting, composed of labor, religious, educational, and civic groups, and to its instigator, Gor-

don MacInnes, for pressing New York City television stations to recognize the existence of their state. (New Jersey has never had a VHF outlet that was truly its own, although Channel 13, New York, has been licensed nominally to Newark.) The coalition announced on Oct. 9 that six stations had entered binding agreements to increase their New Jersey coverage. Perverse to the last, none of them covered the announcement.

*Dart*: to the *New York Post* for its page-1 headline of Oct. 12: REPORT HALF OF CITY HS PUPILS ON DRUGS. The story underneath steadily undercut the headline: paragraph 1 said the total was "almost half," not "half"; paragraph 3 lowered the number to 45 per cent; and paragraph 4 let slip the information that the total included users of marijuana, which is scarcely the implication of the phrase "on drugs."

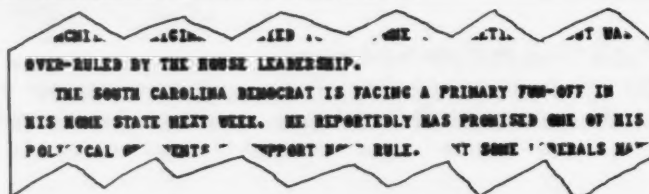
*Laurel*: to the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, for its second annual investigative project, in which more than three dozen young volunteer reporters were turned loose on public and private institutions in San Francisco. Results started to appear in the *Guardian* during the fall, notably in a Nov. 1 supplement that revealed sloth and worse in many city offices. The project was supported by the Vanguard Foundation.

*Dart*: to Marshall Field, for declaring to a reader that the staffs of his Chicago newspapers, the *Sun-Times* and the *Daily News*, had shown a pro-McGovern bias without first making the charge to the accused.

*Laurel*: to the *St. Petersburg Times*, for its new weekly column, "Watch This Space." It is devoted to a novel kind of investigation—tests of advertisers' claims, both national and local. One arduous effort was given to tracking down a policeman who had endorsed Bayer aspirin to Scarsdale, N.Y., to find out whether he used that brand. (He did.)

### Off and funning

—UPI Broadcast Wire, Sept. 6.



## Election coverage '72: 1

How well did the media cover the campaign? Was reporting influenced by Administration attacks? A survey's discomfiting findings.

### The fruits of Agnewism

BEN H. BAGDIKIAN

■ If you were depending on daily reports in some metropolitan dailies—the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, the *New York Times*, the *New York News* (the country's largest; circulation 2,125,000), or the *Wall Street Journal* (second-largest; circulation 1,250,000)—you would not have known promptly that a former FBI agent had confirmed that, under command of officials associated with the White House, he had spied electronically on Democratic headquarters and reported to the President's campaign officials.

Similarly, you would not have read that evidence had been unearthed by a reputable newspaper that this was part of a massive clandestine effort financed by hundreds of thousands of Nixon campaign dollars for the infiltration, sabotage, and subversion of the Democratic Party, or a report of importation of thugs into Washington to provoke riots and beat up a controversial public figure.

---

Ben H. Bagdikian recently resigned as media critic/ombudsman for the *Washington Post*. With this issue he joins *CJR* as National Correspondent.

If you were depending on the usual special election-year political documentaries broadcast in prime time to explore and explain these events and other issues of the presidential campaign, you would have discovered that suddenly, in 1972, this form of political reporting had practically disappeared.

A sample study of leading papers and network specials during the presidential campaign makes it clear that the Nixon Administration's three-year war against the news media has succeeded. There has been a retrogression in printing newsworthy information that is critical of the Administration and a notable decline in investigation of apparent wrongdoing when it is likely to anger or embarrass the White House. This, coupled with the shrewd manipulation of the media by Nixon officials, has moved the American news system closer to becoming a propaganda arm of the administration in power.

It is a tragic time for a reversal of the lessons of the 1950s and 1960s. The news media have never been more technologically massive and penetrating. The check-and-balance between the Executive and the Judiciary is disappearing with

a Supreme Court that reflects the Executive's political values and is increasingly hostile to the press. More than ever, the news media need to function as "the fourth branch of government."

The role of the news media is not merely to repeat like a tape recorder whatever someone in authority chooses to say in public. This is pretty much what the wire services do and do well, which is why they are always pointed to by White House media-watchers as the perfect model of journalism. Newspapers, radio-TV, and magazines should scan the social horizon and make their own decisions about what is important, independent of officialdom. If the President chooses not to talk about issues, this does not mean that objective journalists are forbidden to describe and illuminate the issues. If what is said officially is contradicted by what was said earlier, good journalists are supposed to have memories.

Reporting in the 1972 campaign was not notable for relevant memory. George McGovern had voting records and stands at odds with his campaign positions but these were not often raised, beyond the smaller time frame of the campaign. And Richard Nixon's denunciation of "giveaways" and his announcement of peace plans passed through the main body of journalism with hardly a recollection that in 1968 he was the leading promoter of a minimum income plan, or that he had earlier sworn not to make the kind of deal in Hanoi that he announced in 1972, or that he previously had quietly switched from nuclear "superiority" to "sufficiency."

Day-to-day routine reporting came close to being Administration propaganda, but for different reasons than the handling of basic issues; it tended to be propagandistic because President Nixon held himself aloof from the press, removing himself from public association with or personal accountability for the Watergate affair, the more unpleasant parts of the Soviet wheat deal, and the Election Eve peace-is-at-hand scenario. This pitted his opponent not against the President but against swarms of substitutes for the President. Correspondents could not ask the President what he meant by his grandiose public statements, but they could and did ask Sen. McGovern, producing aggressive, critical, and

damaging reporting at every turn of the McGovern campaign. It is regrettable that the President didn't make himself more available, but this strategy is not new. Franklin D. Roosevelt used to do it except for one last-minute coup de grace.

Two major changes in day-to-day campaign reporting reflected wounds inflicted by the Administration's war on the press. One was the tendency of both print and broadcast media, when under fire for real or imagined unfairness, to retreat to mathematical editing: to give each major side the same play and space each day, regardless of the inherent news values of each story. "Twinning"—equal side-by-side Democratic and Republican daily campaign stories—was the rule in 1972. An uncoerced editor might decide that when George McGovern made a major statement on defense policy which was denounced rhetorically by a Republican campaign official that they were not of equal interest. But twinning made them so in the public eye, demeaning the President's opponent by seeming to accord him the same status as Administration underlings.

The other difference in day-to-day reporting was that in past years when a major candidate refused to make himself available for questioning, the media pounded away at him editorially and reportorially. This did not always flush the man out but it made his nonappearance an issue and made it clear that the candidate was giving no exposition of his real plans beyond rhetorical generalities in press releases.

For example, when White House press agents handed out a presidential statement on drugs that attacked courts for worsening the problem, it made headlines all over the country (NIXON SAYS JUDGES HINDER DRUG WAR, *Baltimore Sun*, page 1, Sept. 23). It is possible that this made such a big display because it was filed from the campaign plane by the eighty-eight correspondents "accompanying" the President on a trip to Texas. The eighty-eight correspondents never spoke to the President. They were in another plane and were handed the press release by White House press agents while their plane was in the air; on landing they rushed to phones to dictate stories based solely on the handout. As Richard Reeves commented in *New York magazine*, it would have



been nice to ask the President which judges he meant and what he thought judges could do about the drug problem.

Nixon's strategy was standard for an incumbent sure of victory. The failure was that of a news system which did not systematically remind the public of the fact that it was electing a President for four years without knowing how he responded to issues in the campaign—of a news system that was biased in favor of the President or lazy or fearful of the operatives at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., or of the Federal Communications Commission, the Attorney General's Anti-Trust Division, the FBI, the Internal Revenue Service, the

---

## ***"Reflected wounds inflicted by the war on the press . . ."***

---

Securities and Exchange Commission, or the effect of governmental denunciation on a newspaper's standing in the stock market.

The failure was the fault of publishers and editors so personally favorable to the President that they do not permit their news columns to press him critically as they would other public figures under comparable circumstances. According to corrected compilations by *Editor & Publisher*, of all daily papers reporting any presidential endorsement, 93 per cent endorsed Nixon. Endorsements ordinarily are dismissed as ineffective in persuading voters. But DeVan L. Shumway, public affairs director of the Committee for the Reelection of the President and a former UPI correspondent, disagreed; he said endorsements were particularly effective in smaller papers, and he is probably right.

This year saw a visible return to the sweeping orders for entire newspaper chains to back the President. When chains are gobbling up independent newspapers they have a standard speech about respecting local autonomy. This year the Cox chain ordered all its papers to endorse Nixon. The Scripps-Howard chain sent a tele-

typed editorial to be inserted in all their papers entitled **WE CHOOSE NIXON AGAIN**. The teletyped editorial from headquarters began:

Four years ago when the editors of (Name Your Paper) . . . met in editorial conference, they decided. . . .

The Dirks Brothers' economic *Newspaper Newsletter* for Oct. 31 reported:

Directors of the American Newspaper Publishers Assn. decided at their meeting in early October to maintain for now their neutral stance on whether newspapers should seek exemptions from price controls on First Amendment grounds. They may take up the question at the next meeting, in December. We understand some of the publishers, a vast majority of whom support President Nixon's reelection, were chary of taking any action that implied criticism of the President's policies.

If this report is true it is too full of exquisite ironies to explore in detail. But it is worth noting that publishers are overwhelmingly in favor of an Administration whose views and whose Supreme Court appointees' views of the First Amendment are among the most constricted in history; that these First Amendment views have sent their reporters to jail, threaten to send more in the future, and have permitted prior restraint upon publication.

Does the Republicanism of these publishers affect the news they print in their papers? It is official dogma in American journalism that editorials do not affect the news. It is official dogma of the Nixon Administration that the opposite is true, that the news is written by liberal Democratic reporters and is heavily biased against the Republicans. But for most papers this is not true. Conservative publishers do not often hire liberal editors who stay liberal. Conservative editors do not let their reporters regularly write reports that offend the editors' sensibilities. Systematic studies show the opposite: editorial endorsements and publishers' personal politics do affect the use and display of news in favor of the candidate the publisher likes. Sometimes it is blatant, but usually it is done by omission or deemphasis of news hurting the publishers' candidate. This is true of the study made for this article: pro-Nixon papers had a much higher tendency to suppress damaging Watergate stories than papers making no endorsement.

The enterprise generally labeled "The Water-

gate Affair" (or "caper" by those wishing to put it in the category of panty raids) began in mid-June with the arrest of five men as they broke into the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate hotel-apartment complex in Washington. The men, mostly former CIA or FBI agents, were loaded with electronic and other equipment, thousands of dollars of cash in new bills, and notebooks with initials and telephone numbers leading to the White House and the Committee for the Reelection of the President. As the story unfolded it led to at least \$10 million in unaccounted Nixon campaign funds gathered before a new contributions reporting law went into effect last April. It was from these funds that this project seemed to have been financed. The project apparently encompassed a large-scale effort dating from 1971 to sabotage and immobilize the Democratic Party by infiltration, eavesdropping, forgery, and acts of violence.

Various Republican campaign and White House officials either avoided comment or denounced the news stories about the case, even after seven men were indicted. This was shrugged off by some as usual campaign hanky-panky. But if it had ever occurred before with this virulence and intensity, no one knew it. John D. M. Hamilton, former chairman of the Republican National Committee, said he had never heard of anything like it before. He added, "I think they're doing their best to ruin the political system in this country." Denison Kitchel, Barry Goldwater's campaign manager in 1964, said, "The sabotage, if it happened, is very bad and very damaging to our political system." Bruce Felknor, another Republican and former executive director of the Fair Campaign Practices Committee, said, "Nothing like this has ever happened before in a national campaign."

There was abundant evidence that the "Watergate Affair" was an extraordinary and ominous story of major proportions. Serious men, including conservatives such as William F. Buckley, Jr., and U.S. Sen. Strom Thurmond, saw it as a dangerous corrosion of the American political system. There was little excuse for its not attracting massive press investigative and display attention.

There are more conventional reasons why one

could expect the news media to seize every new detail with excitement. Quite aside from its implications for political ethics and the use of government power in a free society, the story was in the classic tradition of cloak-and-dagger and cops-and-robbers. It exuded the odor of official corruption that sets conventional investigative and page 1 juices flowing. During the Truman Administration, day after day the country's front pages were full of horrors, with minor detail piled on minor detail, of men close to the President accepting deep freezes, and their wives mink coats, from supplicants before government. Sherman Adams, the most trusted aide of probably the most trusted President in this century, Dwight D. Eisenhower, fell from grace as a result of newspapers' putting reporters on his trail and stories on page 1 because Adams had accepted hotel rooms and other favors from a friendly garment manufacturer.

But curiously, the allocation of fulltime journalistic investigation to this far more important story was hardly lavish. *Hudson's Washington News Media Contacts Directory* lists working journalists based in Washington. Using it, I found that sixteen bureaus with ten or more correspondents employ a total of 433 reporters. Of these,

---

## "Sweeping orders for entire chains to back the President . . ."

---

fewer than fifteen were assigned fulltime to Watergate—some for only two weeks. All organizations of any size apparently had a total of only twenty reporters on the case fulltime and most of these not from the start.

The average Washington bureau had no one working fulltime on the Watergate story: Newhouse, with twenty-one correspondents, had none; Gannett, with twelve reporters, had none; Copley, with seven, had none; the Baltimore *Sun*, with thirteen, had none. Networks also were notably missing: ABC, with sixteen reporters, had none;



CBS, with twenty-five, had none; and NBC, with twenty-five, reported one assigned after the Republican Convention.

The *Washington Post*, chief source for the original stories, assigned two reporters fulltime, backed up at various times by six others. The *Washington Star-News* assigned four fulltime. The *New York Times* buried the original burglary on page 50, got into the story late, and finally brought in Walter Rugaber from New York, with an assistant, fulltime; about a dozen scattered correspondents also worked on the story. The *Los Angeles Times*, with seventeen reporters in Washington, had three on the story fulltime from the first day; the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* with eight, had two fulltime and two parttime; the *Chicago Daily News*, with six reporters, had two on it off and on; the *Chicago Sun-Times*, with five, no one; and the *Chicago Tribune*, with eleven reporters, two fulltime (only in mid-October).

*Time*, with nineteen Washington reporters, had one on the story fulltime after the GOP Convention; *Newsweek*, with twenty-six reporters, had one fulltime with occasional assistance from two others; and *U.S. News & World Report*, with fifty-six reporters, had no one fulltime on the story. AP, with sixty-five reporters in Washington, had none on the story fulltime; UPI, with fifty-one, also had none fulltime. Scripps-Howard declined to respond.

It is possible that more man-hours of investigative journalism were put into the 1962 rumor (never confirmed) that John F. Kennedy had been secretly married in 1947 than were assigned to investigate the Watergate Affair.

In 1952 there were two spectacular campaign stories ("spectacular" for that time: neither came close to the importance of Watergate). Both were about special funds, though very different ones. Richard Nixon, running as Eisenhower's vice presidential candidate on a ticket promising to "clean up the mess in Washington," was found in September to have been the recipient of a secret fund maintained by a group of California millionaires to assist Mr. Nixon in any way he thought best for his political future. It was considered serious enough to cast doubt on Nixon's ability to stay on the ticket, and only after the

melodramatic "Checkers" speech on television did Eisenhower unequivocally reendorse him.

Several days later, it was discovered that the Democratic presidential candidate, Adlai E. Stevenson, while governor of Illinois, also had a special fund. His was put together by Illinois businessmen to augment the civil service salaries of other top state officials in order to attract qualified men from private life.

A careful study of the news treatment of these two fund stories was made by Arthur Rowse and reported in his book, *Slanted News* (Beacon Press, 1957). Rowse looked at thirty-one leading dailies and found that papers endorsing the Republican ticket (twenty-seven of the thirty-one) tended not to print the Nixon fund story as soon as it was available, not to put it on page 1 when they did, and when they finally did print it to do so with a denial lead, followed in subsequent days with stories about public figures defending Nixon. But they tended to put the Stevenson fund story on page 1 as soon as they could and to follow it with Republican denunciations of Stevenson because of his fund.

The same tendencies appeared in handling of crucial Watergate developments during the midst of the campaign last October. Four specific stories were looked at for placement in thirty papers representing 23 per cent of American daily circulation. Most of the papers are those regularly received in the Columbia University journalism library and include some of the best large dailies in the country.

The papers were: the *Buffalo Evening News*, *Chicago Daily News*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Detroit News*, *Kansas City Star*, *Milwaukee Journal*, *Minneapolis Tribune*, *New York Post*, *New York Times*, *New York Daily News*, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, *Baltimore Evening Sun*, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, *Los Angeles Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Atlanta Constitution*, *Boston Globe*, *Houston Chronicle*, *Ithaca (N.Y.) Journal*, *Newsday*, *Providence Evening Bulletin*, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, *St. Petersburg Times*, *San Diego Union*, *Washington Post*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.

In dozens of other papers, small to large, spot-

## Two partisans: which was fairer?

□ How does the bias of a newspaper's management affect coverage of a presidential campaign? Last August I decided to compare the front-page coverage of a pro-Nixon paper and a pro-McGovern paper from Labor Day to Election Day, the traditional campaign period.

The papers I chose were the Cincinnati *Enquirer* and the Boston *Globe*. The *Globe* was one of the few papers whose stands consistently paralleled those of McGovern, and a staff member told me it was only a matter of time before a formal endorsement appeared. The *Enquirer* had endorsed Nixon in March. Also, the *Globe's* national editor had worked for Sen. Muskie; *Enquirer* president Francis Dale had been chairman of the national citizens group to reelect President Nixon; both papers have six-column formats easy to compare at a glance; and both were in potential World Series towns and thus equally diverted from politics.

The first thing I noticed was that the campaign was not news in Cincinnati in September and wasn't consistent front-page news in Boston, either. (I tried to focus my attention on campaign events; plenty of news in this period probably affected voting behavior—Watergate, peace efforts, etc.—but comparing their play seemed to involve too many variables.) The *Enquirer* carried fewer than a half-dozen page 1 stories on the campaigning of Sen. McGovern, Vice President Agnew, and the Republican "surrogates." (The President wasn't campaigning in September.) The *Globe* carried many more, but did not put the campaign on page 1 every day.

The *Globe* had the same problem as the networks. It had decided to balance its page 1 coverage, giving both parties the same amount of space and the same prominence. On Sept. 20, under a two-column headline THE CAMPAIGN, there were two stories with one-column heads: one on a speech McGovern had delivered the day before, the other on an Agnew speech. Same thing Sept. 21 and 22.

Things picked up for both papers in October. The *Enquirer* carried eight page 1 stories related to the campaign from Oct. 3 through Oct. 13. Three concerned McGovern speeches; three concerned Nixon speeches; two dealt with both men. Two of the three Nixon stories occupied the lead position. So did this story, which I did not count as a campaign story but which does suggest something about news judgments in Cincinnati: NO. 1 FAN 'AGAINST TV SPORTS BLACKOUT.' You know who No. 1 is. That story wasn't on any of some twenty other front pages I saw. The *Globe* put it in the sports section.

The World Series opened on Oct. 14, and the *Enquirer* carried only three front-page stories in any way related to politics from then till the Series ended on Oct. 22. Two were, IF MCGOVERN LEADS PARTY, CONNALLY MAY QUIT and NIXON STUDIES SPENDING CUTS. Not campaign event stories, but clearly campaign stories. The third said, MCGOVERN CATCHING UP IN POLL.

The *Globe*, meanwhile, had the campaign on the front page every day from Oct. 3 through Oct. 23. (Of course, the Red Sox were not in the Series and the Reds were.) On eight of those days Nixon and

McGovern stories of equal size appeared under the coordinating headline, THE CAMPAIGN; on seven other days there were Nixon and McGovern stories of equal size and play, but without THE CAMPAIGN. The *Globe* was stretching to find Nixon stories. One day it was NIXON GIRDS FOR BATTLE, meaning only that he had met with some aides.

From the end of the World Series to Election Day, the *Enquirer* had campaign stories on page 1 every day but one. Four were roundups, eight dealt with Nixon activities, and ten dealt with McGovern. The McGovern edge was washed out by the headlines: a total of twenty-eight columns for each candidate. Also, the *Enquirer* ran a front page editorial on Oct. 27, with a four-column headline, PEACE IS AT HAND. It said, "... These objectives, moreover, will have been achieved without an American President's going to Hanoi to beg. . . ."

In the same fifteen-day period, the *Globe* carried thirty-four stories about the campaign on page 1—sixteen about McGovern, sixteen about Nixon, two about predictions of the election result. In every case but two, the candidates received equal space and play. In the two exceptions, the President received more space. The *Globe* for Sunday, Nov. 5, carried a story about the Massachusetts Poll, showing McGovern ahead; this was balanced by a story by the *Washington Post's* David Broder predicting a national landslide for Nixon. There were equally played stories summing up each candidate's campaign and equally played pictures.

The conclusions I drew are:

1. The *Globe* bent over backward to be fair to Nixon, probably becoming on some days—particularly early in the campaign—unfair to readers and to McGovern. A speech by Julie Eisenhower is just not comparable to that of a presidential candidate.

2. The *Enquirer* may have tried to be fair, but it wasn't. In September it ignored the campaign, and in October it gave the President a noticeable advantage in treatment.

3. The *Globe* campaign stories were almost all written by members of the *Globe's* staff; practically all of the *Enquirer* stories were wire service stories. The *Globe* assigned a man fulltime to McGovern in early September and sent a man out with the President on all of his seven October trips; the *Enquirer* covered McGovern with a staff man only when he was in Ohio, and on one five-day trip very late in the campaign. It assigned a man to Nixon on only three of the seven trips.

It was the *Globe* that was out of step. Only eleven newspapers (four in New York) covered McGovern for all of September and October. Only a half-dozen others covered him as much as half the time. The rest of his traveling press was from magazines, networks, wire services, and the larger chains.

THEO LIPPMAN, JR.

---

Theo Lippman, Jr., is an editorial writer for the *Baltimore Sun*.

checked during the period, there was an even greater silence on Watergate developments, or else brief, incomprehensible fragments from the wire services. These papers ranged from the Rawlins, Wyo., *Times* (circulation 3,400; lead national headline on the day of the Haldeman story, 'SOME PROGRESS' IS REPORTED FOR PEACE, with no Watergate story) to the Omaha *World-Herald* (circulation 243,000) and the Denver *Post* (circulation 251,000), which carried no story about the Haldeman allegations but front-paged the next day's denial.

The first story studied was the exclusive tape-recorded interview obtained by Los Angeles *Times* Washington reporters Ronald Ostrow and Jack Nelson. This appeared on Oct. 5 and had a documented quality from a participant in the alleged conspiracy that was stronger than almost any other of the stories in that period. With it was a long sidebar—a verbatim taped account by the participant, a former FBI agent named Alfred C. Baldwin.

The second story studied was the Oct. 10 Washington *Post* account by Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, who with occasional help by other *Post* reporters, produced most of the investigative information in the case. This story detailed for the first time the scope and technique of the sabotage effort beyond burglarizing and bugging the Watergate. It included the bizarre information from another *Post* reporter, Marilyn Berger, that the famous letter accusing Sen. Edmund Muskie of calling Americans of French-Canadian descent "Canucks" that helped knock him out of the race was a forgery—written, Miss Berger said, by her former reporter colleague on the *Post*, Ken Clawson. Clawson, who had left the *Post* to become Deputy Director of Communications for the White House and a major operative in the media campaign, had, she said, admitted writing the letter; Clawson later denied this.

The third story studied was another *Post* account by Woodward and Bernstein, connecting the President's appointments secretary and confidant, H. R. Haldeman, with the sabotage project. It was an unattributed story, but previous *Post* stories had held up and had been confirmed by other news organizations or official records, so

this one—whether or not it is ultimately proved correct—entered the field with credentials.

The fourth story studied was the White House denial of the Haldeman connection and its bitter denunciation of the Washington *Post*.

The first information readers of the Chicago *Tribune* received of the *Post*'s Haldeman story was not the morning it broke (this story, like all the others, was carried by AP and UPI as well as by the Washington *Post*-Los Angeles *Times* Service). That day the *Trib* had a page 1 headline, FEW AT SHRIVER PARADE. But the next day on page 7, under the headline ZIEGLER DENOUNCES POST SPY STORIES, DENIES LINK, there was from Chicago Tribune Press Service an 18-inch story; two inches explained the *Post* account, the rest denounced the story.

The San Diego *Union*, formerly edited by Herbert Klein, Clawson's boss as Director of Communications for the White House, had no story on the Los Angeles *Times* break, nor on the conspiracy-"Canuck" story, nor on the Haldeman story. But the day after the Haldeman story was not run the *Union* carried a large page 1 editorial by publisher James S. Copley endorsing Nixon and a one-column story on page 4 consisting almost entirely of denunciation of the *Post* headlined: WHITE HOUSE DENIES FUND FOR SPYING.

The Minneapolis *Tribune* did not print the original Haldeman story at all but put the denial of it on page 1. The Philadelphia *Inquirer* (which receives the *Post* news service) did not print the original Haldeman story but the next day printed the denial on page 4.

Of the seven papers that had no original story on the alleged Haldeman connection, five were listed by *Editor & Publisher* as endorsers of Nixon.

There were ninety possibilities for publication of the three news breaks studied—thirty papers times three stories. Of these opportunities, there were thirty-one failures to carry stories at all. Fourteen papers in the sample were listed by *E&P* as having endorsed the President; fifteen were listed as making no endorsement; one endorsed McGovern.

Nixon-endorsing papers had forty-two opportunities to print the stories but 52 per cent of the time did not. The non-Nixon-endorsing papers



## Providence and Chafee: study in fairness

□ Whether the *Providence Journal* and *Evening Bulletin* coverage was balanced in the U.S. Senate campaign in Rhode Island last fall would not likely merit special attention were it not for the fact that the family of Republican Senatorial candidate John H. Chafee is part owner of both dailies. How much of the private corporations' stock is held by relatives of Chafee is one of the best-kept secrets in recent Rhode Island history, and even traditional sources of such information, as well as Chafee's recent opponent, Democratic Sen. Claiborne Pell, said they had no idea of its extent. But both the candidate and the newspapers have confirmed the link, and the checks of all reporters and editors continue to be signed by William G. Chafee, the company treasurer, who is the candidate's cousin. William Chafee, in fact, said recently that John Chafee, who was President Nixon's Secretary of the Navy for three years, even owns some *Journal* and *Bulletin* stock himself.

When I was a *Journal-Bulletin* reporter during the 1966 gubernatorial campaign and asked a question of Horace Hobbs, who was soon to be defeated by Chafee, I remember that he replied, "What's the difference what I say? It will be buried inside while Chafee is grinning on the front page." Days earlier the personable and handsome Chafee had indeed appeared grinning on the front page of the *Sunday Journal* (circ. 198,444), posed atop an elephant; Hobbs, on the same elephant a day later, made page 19 of the weekday *Journal* (circ. 65,000). Hobbs added, however, "I know it's not your fault." The criticism in that campaign was not so much of the quality of reportage (none of my handful of stories was ever altered to favor Chafee) as of other practices.

Last fall's campaign was Chafee's most important, both because the vote was destined to be close and because Pell was one of five vulnerable Democratic incumbents whom Republicans hoped to unseat to obtain a Senate majority. President Nixon campaigned for Chafee four days before the election, and he had been preceded by Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania, Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York, and Nixon's son-in-law, Edward F. Cox.

Pell was bolstered by several appearances by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, former Sen. Eugene McCarthy, and Mrs. Sargent Shriver. Mrs. Jacqueline Onassis said she would have campaigned for Pell—her childhood friend from Newport's exclusive Ocean Drive—would it not have jeopardized her court suit for protection from photographers.

The financial link between Chafee and the two dailies and any recent manifestations of pro-Chafee

bias, however, were notably difficult to discern this year. A study I made of both statewide papers discloses that there was not only a dearth of campaign bias, but both papers must have made a conscious effort to avoid even a hint of favoritism.

In the nine weeks from Labor Day to Election Day, both papers printed 4,014 inches of news copy that tended to help either candidate, by expounding his views or mentioning endorsement or support of him—and only 294 inches separated their total space received. Pell received 1,860 inches (1,061 in the *Journal*), and Chafee 2,154 inches (1,208 in the *Journal*), which gave Chafee 54 per cent of this total coverage. However, Pell campaigned far less than did Chafee because of Senate business that occupied him into October. Moreover, in the two weeks prior to the election, Pell received 54 per cent of the coverage, this coinciding with Chafee's slipping behind in polls for the first time.

In news stories, there was a consistent effort to explore the views of each candidate on such issues as ending the Vietnam War, aiding the elderly, and a U.S. Senator's obligation to Rhode Island; to balance reporting in such instances as face-to-face debates. In fact, after the *Journal* endorsed Chafee two days prior to the election, the newspaper broke with its precedent of withholding last-day political commentary by printing, in most of three columns of page 3, the Democratic outcry over that endorsement.

In the letters to the editor columns, Chafee was endorsed twenty times (twelve in the *Journal*) which gave him 145 inches (85 in the *Journal*), while Pell was endorsed nineteen times (twelve in the *Journal*) for 139 inches—giving Chafee 51 per cent of the space. But Pell, his wife, or prominent out-of-state supporters received 51 per cent of the photographs. The Pells or their prominent friends appeared twenty-seven times (seventeen in the *Journal*), while the Chafees or their VIP endorsers appeared twenty-six times (twenty in the *Journal*).

"Their coverage was fair," Pell said after winning with 54 per cent of the vote. "There's nothing else you could make of it."

GERALD S. NAGEL

Gerald S. Nagel is an instructor at the Borough of Manhattan Community College of the City University of New York, and a freelance writer. He previously was a reporter for several papers, including the *Providence Journal* and *Evening Bulletin*.

(only one of which was listed as having endorsed McGovern), had forty-eight opportunities and only 23 per cent failed to print the stories.

The Nixon-endorsing papers had forty-two opportunities to put the stories on page 1 but did so only nine times. The non-Nixon endorsers had forty-eight opportunities and among

them put the stories on page 1 twenty-two times.

On the denial of the Haldeman story, of the fourteen Nixon-endorsing papers, eleven ran the denial, two on page 1. The non-Nixon endorsers had sixteen opportunities to run the denial and thirteen did, six of them on page 1.

Not all the Nixon-endorsing papers followed

the pattern. The most consistent and emphatic display of all the stories studied was by the *Houston Chronicle*, an endorser of Nixon and a paper not always praised for professionalism. But it prominently ran on page 1 every one of the news breaks studied and, therefore properly, ran the denial of the Haldeman story on page 1.

The papers as a group, whether or not they endorsed Nixon, had a poor record of use and display of these stories—major events in the most ominous episode of high-level dirty politics in our history, occurring at a crucial time of national decision-making.

Where the papers in this study are the ones in the Rowse study, some comparisons are possible. In 1972 the *Chicago Daily News* ran none of the three October stories on page 1; in 1952 it ran the Nixon-Stevenson fund stories on page 1. The *Detroit News*, which endorsed Republicans both times, put the 1952 Nixon fund story on page 9 the first day, but made the Stevenson fund story the lead the first day; in 1972 its three October Watergate newsbreaks were, respectively, on pages 22, 11 (with a denial lead), and 8.

The *Kansas City Star* in 1952 waited a day to run the Nixon fund story and then ran it under the head, 'SMEAR' TO NIXON, but it used the Stevenson fund story the first possible day, as the lead. Its 1972 stories in this study were all inside.

The *Milwaukee Journal* was consistent in 1952 and 1972, giving page 1 plays at first opportunity.

The *Philadelphia Bulletin* in 1952 held the Nixon story a day and then used a head, EISENHOWER DEFENDS NIXON'S HONESTY, but used the Stevenson story on page 1 the first day. In 1952 the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, then an Annenberg paper, put the Nixon story on page 2 and the Stevenson story on page 1 under the biggest headline used in the campaign. In 1972, now a Knight paper, it used the *Los Angeles Times* story prominently under a page 1 banner, but did not use either the Oct. 10 or Oct. 25 stories.

The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* in both 1972 and 1952 used stories at first opportunity on page 1. The more conservative *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* in 1952 held the Nixon story a day and then ran it under the head IKE PUTS TRUST IN NIXON, but ran the Stevenson story on page 1 at first op-

portunity. In 1972, it ran the *Los Angeles Times* story in its third section, and the Oct. 10 and 25 stories not at all.

The *Cleveland Plain Dealer* used the Nixon story the first day on page 13 in 1952 and the Stevenson story on page 1, but three days late. In 1972 it did not use the *Los Angeles Times* story, put the Oct. 10 story on page 1, the Haldeman story on page 8.

In 1952 the *Los Angeles Times* held the Nixon fund story for three days and then ran it as EXPENSE FUND FOR NIXON EXPLAINED BY FRIENDS. It ran the Stevenson fund story on page 1 the first day. In 1972 it gave its own story a big page 1 play, but put other stories on the inside, and skipped the Haldeman story on Oct. 25—perhaps a reflection of the endemic bitterness of the Washington bureau of the *Times* toward the *Post*.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* had a good record of prominent display at first possible opportunity of stories in both 1952 and 1972.

In comparing behavior of the papers in 1952 and 1972 the numbers only hint at relative journalistic performance; the stories are different in quality and impact and the times have changed. But insofar as they have any comparative meaning, in 1952 the papers in the study had thirty-one aggregate opportunities to use the Nixon-damaging story on page 1 at first opportunity (if they waited for a second-day story they could run the denial instead) and this happened 40 per cent of the time. In this 1972 study of the three major breaks in October, they had ninety aggregate opportunities to use Nixon-damaging stories on page 1 and did it 32 per cent of the time.

Though the precise numbers are minimally significant, the general quality of use is not. American journalism learned much from its doctrinaire errors of the 1950s. McCarthyism and the start of anti-press statements with Adlai Stevenson's "one party press" commentary had its impact. It was in the years 1952 to 1968 that professionalism in journalism rose rapidly and the old assumptions of the dogfight on Champa St., of the police reporting mentality, of Chamber of Commerce boosterism, of cynicism about news, and of the almost universal acceptance of each paper's sacred cows all began a metamorphosis into re-

portorial independence and discipline that have changed the face of the trade. But the performance of the printed press in October was not up to that elevated standard and is one of the more depressing signs of deterioration under pressure.

There were technical reasons why some papers might not have been able to run the stories at once, but only a few. AP and UPI were late in picking up the Los Angeles *Times* and Washington *Post* stories. The Oct. 5 Baldwin story was on AP at 3:08 a.m., Eastern time, and on UPI almost seven hours later. This would have made it unavailable for those morning papers not receiving the Los Angeles *Times*-Washington *Post* news service. These would be the *Wall Street Journal*, Richmond *Times-Dispatch*, New York *Times*, and New York *News* in the East, and the Minneapolis *Tribune* and Chicago *Tribune* in the Midwest (where the hour's difference would not help much). But the *Times*, the *Daily News*, and the *Wall Street Journal* did not run the story in their next editions on Oct. 6.

All other papers either were PMs (fifteen), or AMs with the Los Angeles *Times*-Washington *Post* news service (eight), or were in the West where, in subsequent AP and UPI pickups, the time zone difference made up for the lateness of wire copy. The Haldeman story for Oct. 25, for example, was on AP at 11:48 p.m. and UPI at 11:58 p.m. the night before, hitting the Western papers before 9 p.m. Los Angeles *Times* and Washington *Post* service clients received stories at about the same time as did the *Post* itself.

The failure to use these major stories was not for lack of space. The day the Chicago *Tribune* decided not to run the sabotage-Clawson story, it had space in its main news section for two stories, each 14 inches long, with headlines NEW PHOENICIAN TEMPLE IS FOUND and BAGELS BECOME A U.S. STAPLE.

The day the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* did not run the Los Angeles *Times* story, it had a campaign page headed by a picture of Sargent Shriver shaking his fist belligerently, with a prominent headline below MCGOVERN 'SMEARS' ASSAILED BY AGNEW.

The same kind of reverse accusation occurred in the Richmond *Times-Dispatch*, which on the day it did not run the story alleging a widespread

Republican sabotage network had a page 2 story headlined PROBE ASKED OF ATTACKS ON NIXON.

The day the New York *Daily News* did not print the same story it ran an editorial, THE LOW, LOW ROAD, saying, "... Senator McGovern's presidential campaign spiraled downward into the gutter. . . . Can such a man be believed, or trusted with the nation's highest office?"

This was in the period when *Time* magazine, which did a creditable job of investigative reporting of the affair, reported:

*Time* has also learned that Bernard Barker, the former CIA agent who led the raiding party into the Watergate, recruited nine Cubans from Miami in early May and assigned them to attack Daniel Ellsberg, the man who released the Pentagon Papers to the public. Barker flew the Cubans to Washington first class, showed them a picture of Ellsberg, and told them: "Our mission is to hit him—to call him a traitor and punch him in the nose. Hit him and run." . . . The idea was to . . . start a riot.

The attempt was made but miscarried.

It brings thoughts of the movie *Z*. And of daily papers undisturbed by strong signs of thugery in national politics. It also helps explain why George Gallup found that 48 per cent of Americans had never heard of the Watergate Affair and most of the rest didn't seem worried by it.

This could be another dividend of the Nixon-Agnew attacks on the "Eastern" press (to which the Vice President attached the Los Angeles *Times* and a few other papers west of the Appalachians). Most of the significant findings in the Watergate Affair came from the Washington *Post*, the paper most hated and publicly attacked by the Administration. Other major investigative work was done by the New York *Times* and *Time*, with a major break by the Los Angeles *Times*. These are also the organizations that most damaged McGovern with their reporting and editorials. Despite the obsession of the Nixon media-watchers, these news organizations originate such stories not because they are liberal or anti-Nixon but because they have competent staffs covering Washington.

Apparently the sources of these stories—some of the most experienced staffs in the country—tended to be neutralized by the Nixon-Agnew campaign against them. The *Christian Science Monitor* asked its correspondents around the



country to poll people on the impact of the Watergate Affair. Godfrey Sperling, Jr., reporting on the results, wrote, "Many people, it seems, are slow to accept 'evidence' which has been brought forth by Eastern publications."

If the networks did almost no original reporting requiring intense investigation, this is not unusual. What was unusual in TV in the fall of 1972 was another phenomenon, also a radical retrogression from good journalism.

The networks were used in some ways they could not easily avoid, any more than could the correspondents who were handed press releases in midflight. The President would buy radio time

---

## "Pro-Nixon papers had a higher rate of suppression . . ."

---

for a "white paper" that removed him from questioning but was the basis for lead stories in newspapers thereafter. But broadcasters were used in other ways that they could have prevented. *Variety* on Oct. 25 reported that some of the same TV stations that had told the McGovern campaign they could not clear time for him on Oct. 10 "for reasons of policy" had cleared similar time for the Nixon campaign, "their rigid policies having been reconsidered and abandoned." Two New York outlets had said they could not clear time for McGovern; yet they did so for Nixon's substitute, John Connally. Five of the seven outlets in Los Angeles found their time could not be made available for the McGovern campaign but could for Nixon's, as did five of six in Philadelphia and every TV outlet in cities like Cleveland and Detroit.

But the most significant change in network behavior in this campaign was the almost complete disappearance of prime-time political specials on issues between Labor Day and Election Day. The documentary in prime time has a special function in TV journalism. It is the only

time a large national audience obtains any more than a detached fragment of unintegrated information. Walter Cronkite's CBS news show included several five-minute "mini-documentaries." They were often effective, but were no substitute for reporting in depth about basic issues.

The campaign did not lack for issues which were more important than those in most elections: wage-price controls affecting every working person; the proper size of the future defense budget; the Vietnam War and the peace-is-at-hand announcement; the relationship government should have to big business such as ITT and Lockheed; the Watergate and its questions about political ethics; and the history and character of the two men running for office, one only semi-visible in the White House, the other not well known to most voters.

In the past, networks had made election specials out of lesser stuff. In 1960, CBS devoted fifty-five minutes to the minor candidates; in 1964, a special to Mrs. Goldwater; in 1968, a program to the vice president of the third party. The CBS Labor Day-Election Day schedule for unpaid election specials has been:

1960—four hours for the Nixon-Kennedy debates; one hour on *Money and the Next President*; one hour called *The Right Man*; and 55 minutes on *Other Hats in the Ring*.

1964—30 minutes on Mrs. Goldwater; 30 minutes called *Politics Is a Funny Business*; 60 minutes called *The Presidency*; 30 minutes called *One Week to Go*; 30 minutes on *The Polls and the Candidates*; 30 minutes on *Conversation with Dean Burch*; 30 minutes called *The Press and the Candidates*; 30 minutes on *Conversation with John Daley*; and 30 minutes called *Two Days to Go*.

1968—30 minutes called *Conversation with Lawrence O'Brien*; 30 minutes on *Wallace's Selection of a Vice President*; 30 minutes on *The Next Vice President*; 30 minutes on *Candidates in Close-Up*; and an hour called *Two Days to Go*.

1972—60 minutes on *The Election Year*; and 60 minutes called *Two Days to Go*.

ABC, the Administration's favorite network, ran no specials this year. Asked why, a spokesman

said, "It's 315, the fairness rule. If we have a documentary that has one minute of a McGovern supporter we've got to have one minute of a Nixon supporter. And then we have to have the same time for every one of the minority parties. Just let me tell you what we'd have to do: Benjamin Spock of the Peoples' Party, John Schmitz of the American Party, Linda Jenness of the Socialist Worker Party, Gus Hall of the Communist Party, Earle Harold Munn of the Prohibition Party, Louis Fisher of the Socialist Labor Party, John Hospers of the Libertarian Party, and John Mahalchik of the America First Party, who would probably insist on showing his replica of the White House molded out of bull excrement."

The ABC spokesman obviously had his list at

---

## "Almost complete disappearance of TV political specials . . ."

---

hand. But the fact is that in any network political documentary on issues Mr. Mahalchik wouldn't have a chance. The Federal Communications Commission says that what the ABC spokesman (and other network people hint at) simply isn't true. Discussion of issues, unlike time given to candidates, is under no compulsion for equal time. The operative language is "afford a reasonable opportunity" for the discussion of conflicting views. The FCC's view of what is a reasonable opportunity is notably broad. An FCC spokesman said, "We have dismissed complaints where there has been a 3-to-1 imbalance in presentation of views. And a network editorial at the end of such a program is not a violation of 315 nor is it interpreted by the FCC as unfair or unbalanced. Documentaries that take a position on issues are not a legal problem. If networks don't put them on it's for some other reason."

The networks provide masses of other reasons why they cannot regularly air political issue specials after Labor Day: they cover the issues in their regular newscasts; they spend a fortune cov-

ering the conventions and campaigns and don't have money left for documentaries; the best people to do the documentaries are out on the road covering the campaign; documentaries take a long time to prepare, and two months after Labor Day isn't enough; the new fall entertainment programs are just starting their sudden-death rating fight and early preemption of any of them kills their ratings; because new programs are being tested during the election weeks "those are the weeks when the agencies are in full command" and they don't like their big clients' shows skipped; and it's pro football time.

Then why was there time after Labor Day for specials like *How to Handle a Woman* (NBC); *Country Music Awards* (CBS); *Private Pension Funds* (NBC)? The Television Information Office urged the public to include in its October viewing such specials as one on the Eskimo curlew bird, Oct. 4; *VD Blues*, the fight against venereal disease, Oct. 9; the story of Christian, a lion, Oct. 20; *Smithsonian Adventure*, Oct. 20; *You're Elected*, *Charlie Brown*, Oct. 29; and so forth.

And how is it that on CBS, for example, in each campaign in 1960, 1964, and 1968 there was an average of seven political election specials, usually at prime time, but in 1972 only two?

The answer appears to be the Nixon-Agnew attack on the networks. The attacks roused public disapproval, a phenomenon that even in microscopic quantities makes broadcast executives catatonic. But there are also some unsubtle practical pressures. The Republican chairman of the FCC began asking for scripts that were critical of the Administration. A conservative ideologue, Patrick Buchanan, organized a White House staff of five persons fulltime to monitor the networks, AP, UPI, and thirty major newspapers. Buchanan warned of possible antitrust action against the networks if they didn't stop critical comments on the Administration. A CBS executive said, "If you don't take the pabulum as they feed it to you at the White House, they feel there is something very, very wrong with you."

Taking official pabulum at face value and repeating it to the public, even though the journalist knew it to be false, created one of the major crises in American politics in this century. For

years, the newspapers and broadcasters repeated straight-faced and without investigation or comment what Sen. Joseph McCarthy said even when they had evidence that what he said was untrue or irrelevant. American journalism emerged from that era with a central lesson that until now has been accepted by all reputable news organizations: it is the duty of the responsible journalist not only to report accurately what an important official says on an important subject but also to inform the citizen when the journalist can show that the important official is wrong.

During the 1972 campaign Cassie Mackin of NBC said on the air, "The President accuses McGovern of wanting to give those on welfare more than those who work, which is not true. The President says McGovern is calling for a—quote—confiscation of wealth—unquote—which is not true." Before Mackin was off the air, top officials at NBC received three calls from the White House. Presidential assistant Ken Clawson said, "She, in effect, called the President a liar." A fourth call came later.

Occasionally Presidents do lie and when they do good journalists say so. More often it is what Lord Tyrrell, permanent undersecretary of state at the British Foreign Office, once told a correspondent: "You think we lie to you. But we don't lie, really we don't. However, when you discover that, you make an even greater error. You think we tell you the truth."

"My primary concern," Patrick Buchanan has

said, "is that the President have the right of untrammelled communication with the American people." The communications system in the United States today is the most elaborate in the world. There are 1,750 dailies, with more than 62 million circulation; more than 8,000 weeklies; and more than 8,000 broadcasting stations. The President can preempt prime time on broadcasting networks almost any time he wants, and almost simultaneously does so with front pages of all the papers. It is the most awesome, untrammelled communications power exercised by any leader in history.

The President has his untrammelled communication. But in the fall of 1972 the performance of the news media, the only communications mechanism that can possibly act as a balance to such awesome presidential power, shows that the prolonged attack on the most independent and competent of the nation's news organizations has inhibited the untrammelled interpretation by professional journalists of what the President and his subordinates say and do.

Months before the presidential campaign began, in May of 1972, the *Freedom of Information Center Report*, No. 281, looking at the present state of the media and government, declared: "The analysis concludes that the seeds have been planted for an era of stricter governmental control of the mass media." Coverage of the 1972 presidential election suggests that the seeds have begun to take root.

### Striking coincidence department

**NEWS RELEASE**  
NEW ENGLAND TELEPHONE COMPANY



**FOR RELEASE:**

New England Telephone Company today, September 12, petitioned the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission for a re-hearing of the Company's rate request.

The Company also filed a motion asking that in the meantime new rates go into effect as soon as possible based on the regulatory agency's recent order — without prejudice to the re-hearing motion.

In its motion for re-hearing, the Company cited several basic issues, and stresses that it will not be able to earn the rate of return set by the Commission — even on the rate base allowed by the Commission.

\*Per N.H. Public Utilities Law the Commission has 10 days to act on this motion.

—News release,  
New England Telephone Co.

**Phone Co. S**

**Rehear**

By DONN THURTELL

New England Telephone yesterday petitioned the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission (PUC) for a re-hearing of the company's rate hike request.

The company also filed a motion asking that in the meantime, new rates go into effect as soon as possible based on the regulatory agency's recent order without prejudice to the rehearing motion.

In its move for rehearing, the telephone company cited several basic issues and stressed that it will not be able to earn the rate of return set by the commission, even on the rate base allowed by the PUC. Under

—Manchester, N.H.  
*Union Leader*, Sept. 13

## Fairness and balance in the evening news

■ "Catherine Mackin has been campaigning with the President," John Chancellor noted on NBC the night of Sept. 28, "and she has some observations to make on the Nixon campaign style. . . ."

With that standard introduction, the *NBC Nightly News* switched to a film report by Cassie Mackin from Los Angeles. It looked like a typical item from the "wind-in-the-hair" school of TV journalism: Mackin doing a "standup" outside the hotel where President Nixon had spoken the night before, too late to make the network news programs. But the script that accompanied the routine clips of Richard (and Pat) Nixon shaking hands, climbing into helicopters, and appearing at the fund-raising dinner was sharp and unequivocal.

Mackin said that the Nixon campaign consists of "speeches before closed audiences—invited guests only. . . ." She reported that the press was getting only glimpses of Nixon as he campaigned. Then she added:

There is a serious question of whether President Nixon is setting up straw men by leaving the very strong impression that McGovern is making certain proposals which in fact he is not. . . .

The film cut to Richard Nixon speaking of "some who believe" in defense budget cuts that "would make the United States the second-strongest nation . . . with the second-strongest Army . . . with the second-strongest Air Force. . . ." Then back to Mackin: "The President obviously meant McGovern's proposed defense budget, but his criticism never specified how the McGovern plan would weaken the country. On welfare, the President accuses McGovern of wanting to give those on welfare more than those who work—which is not true. On tax reform, the President says McGovern has called for 'confiscation of wealth'—which is not true."

It was a critical moment in NBC's coverage of the 1972 presidential campaign. Rather than merely re-amplifying a campaign attack, Cassie Mackin was offering a strong corrective—for NBC's audience of 10 million. Her gloss was too much for the men in the White House who monitor the media. NBC officials received three phone calls from Nixon Administration men protesting the Mackin item—the first call almost before the program's theme had faded.

The Mackin report is one of the more intriguing trophies captured on videotape by a team of faculty and students organized into the Network News Study Group at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Beginning shortly after Labor Day, the traditional start of the main presidential campaign, the Network News Study Group videotaped all of the regular (Monday through Friday) evening news programs of the three commercial networks. Stenographic transcripts of the accompanying texts also were made and all pictures and text items related to the election campaign broken out for classification and coding by competitor. In addition, a "scrapbook" was compiled of presidential campaign coverage in such national print outlets as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and the newsmagazines.

This computer-aided system makes it possible to determine how much time the candidates and their

supporters receive on each network's news program, which issues are covered, which speeches are covered, and how the network presents the news, as well as other factors such as use of film and background slides, placement of the story, the nature of the anchorman's and the reporter's commentaries, together with any nonverbal communications accompanying the report. (This last point is important since writer Edith Efron, to take one egregious example of her slipshod methods in her book *The News Twisters*, recorded words without reference to the accompanying image.)

In the specific context of the last campaign, the computer program could isolate, for example, how the Democratic Party headquarters break-in was described on various newscasts: was it called the Watergate Affair, or the Watergate Case, or the Watergate Caper, or the Watergate Scandal? And what was the frequency of mention, the emphasis, and the mode of presentation? Or the computer could test the complaint of George McGovern, expressed during the campaign, that the networks too literally tried for "balance" by giving him two minutes on the evening news—along with two minutes for one of the Republican surrogates like Melvin Laird or Clark MacGregor. (The networks did, according to a preliminary analysis, tend to "balance" McGovern film with "surrogate" film, and the question remains: Was that a conscientious application of "objectivity," or was it, as Sander Vanocur suggests, a decision made by "one of the vice presidents in charge of fear?") And the computer could tell whether there was any change in the frequency or tone of Cassie Mackin's appearance on camera following the White House complaints to her superiors. (The answer seems to be, "no change"; a check, without benefit of computers, shows she appeared as much after the Los Angeles report as before.)

The tape replays, transcript coding, and computer analysis of the campaign will occupy the Network News Study Group through next Spring. But, with the help of a preliminary analysis by three members of the Group, Paul Schindler, Jr., Richard Parker, and Norman Sandler, it is possible to sort out some definite patterns of campaign coverage.

The *ABC Evening News*, with Howard K. Smith and Harry Reasoner, relied in the main on straightforward film reports of speeches, news conferences, and other media events. ABC's major effort involved weekly film reports from Columbus, O., described as a "fairly typical American city." In August, at the time of the Republican National Convention, ABC dispatched reporter Jim Kincaid, a producer, and a film crew to remain in Columbus for the entire campaign. These reports—about ten—ran from three to five minutes and closed with, "Jim Kincaid in the ABC city, Columbus, O. . . ."

The *NBC Nightly News* appeared on the tapes and transcripts as low key, almost bland, in its campaign coverage. The use of a daily calendar backdrop and "here's-the-kind-of-news-day-it-has-been" introduction by John Chancellor at the top of the program contributed to a certain detached feeling. Chancellor at his desk, and the news items appearing as slides or film on the wall, seemed to create a physical separation of the news from the newsmen;



Chancellor often craned around to look at the news from the viewer's position. The correspondents—Mackin, Richard Valeriani, John Dancy, Douglas Kiker—were more sharply focused; they offered analysis and interpretation.

Among the more notable recorded examples of NBC's efforts in the period recorded was the coverage of Henry Kissinger's news conference of Thursday, Oct. 26, when Kissinger announced that "Peace is at hand." The announcement itself, the worldwide reaction and its effect on the presidential campaign, commanded the first fifteen minutes of the ABC and CBS broadcasts that night. But NBC went even further, devoting the entire *Nightly News* to events related to Kissinger's announcement.

The *CBS News with Walter Cronkite* made the most visible departure from the older canons of TV news; in the face of cynical dicta about the short attention span of the audience, CBS did longer, more demanding stories. *CBS News* also made extensive use of graphics—charts, slides, diagrams, and other techniques normally neglected in this putatively visual medium—and took the unprecedented step of moving anchorman Cronkite from his desk to a standing position in front of a chart illustrating the complexities of the Soviet wheat sale.

These differences between CBS and its rivals in story length and in style were perhaps most evident in the contrasting coverage of the wheat sale and of Watergate. A first analysis of the tapes indicates that NBC devoted less than half as much time to covering these stories as did CBS; ABC spent slightly more time than NBC did (references to the wheat sale in candidates' speeches and similar circumstances are not counted). Most of the Smith-Reasoner coverage consisted of one six-minute segment reporting on Congressional hearings and quoting farmers who claimed to be cheated in the deal. The Cronkite program, on the other hand, ran about ten stories on the wheat sale, two of them extraordinarily substantial by TV standards. On Sept. 27, CBS spent 11 minutes and 11 seconds on the wheat sale. On Oct. 6, it devoted five minutes more to the sale and its possible effects on higher consumer prices. Quoting others, CBS talked of "the great grain robbery."

The first CBS report began with the announced intention of finding out "who benefited from the sale. . . ." CBS said Agriculture Secretary Butz and other government officials "knew as early as May about the Russian crop failures but withheld news about it." Then Cronkite, proving he was not anchored to his desk, went to a backboard; pictured on it were two buildings and four men. The figures carried briefcases with their names on them: two people were Agriculture Department officials; two were grain company executives. The figures switched sides.

The *CBS News* wheat sale coverage served as a kind of warmup for its Special Report on Watergate on Oct. 27. The first six and one-half minutes of the Cronkite program were devoted to Vietnam, the President's veto of spending bills, and the Dow Jones prices. Then:

**CRONKITE:** Watergate, the opening gate for a still unfolding story of political intrigue with ominous implications. We'll be back in a minute with a detailed report on that story.

**ONE-MINUTE COMMERCIAL**

**CRONKITE** (standing in front of dark screen showing buildings identified with tags as Water-

gate, offices of CRP—Committee for the Reelection of the President—the White House): Watergate has escalated into charges of a high-level campaign of political sabotage and espionage apparently unparalleled in American history. . . .

CBS returned to Watergate again: beginning Monday, Oct. 30, in the last week of the campaign, Cronkite introduced a series of six Special Reports called *The Candidates* and *the Issues*. The Special Reports ranged from 4:24 and 8:23 in length—a total of some forty-one minutes. Again, the reports combined imaginative graphics with the use of film that allowed the candidates to make their cases on such matters as defense, welfare, crime, tax reform, and the "pocketbook issues."

The full study of network campaign coverage between Sept. 14 and Nov. 7 will make for engrossing reading. There are, of course, many things the computer cannot do. To take an obvious case, totals of broadcast minutes alone do not convey the quality of the work under study. On Oct. 25, for example, the *Washington Post* implicated White House aide H. R. (Bob) Haldeman in Watergate; NBC gave the story three and one-half minutes, CBS two and one-half, and ABC 12 seconds. White House special assistant Charles Colson termed the *Post* charges "McCarthyism"; if he is correct, then ABC's 12-second treatment looks prescient.

Moreover, while a computer analysis can identify recurrent words or phrases, the impact of such usages cannot be measured; and again while the story placement and treatment of a topic can be determined, the computer cannot get into the minds of the network executives to answer the question, "Why this way?"

Consequently, any study of the network news must also investigate the mechanics of how news is created by newsmaker and newsmen and women. It must also take into account the institutional constraints—tight budgets, limited staff, time, audience assumptions—that profoundly shape the final news "product." But, pending the results of such a full-scale investigation, it is nevertheless possible to make some noncomputerized judgments about the network news coverage of the 1972 campaign.

While too many "print" journalists still speak sneeringly of the "talent" and "tailor's dummies" of broadcasting, the fact is that TV journalism has been steadily building an impressive record. *CBS News*, and Walter Cronkite in particular, shattered some of the tired old icons of TV. Further, it is apparent that some real "talent" is on the rise at the networks: Mackin and Kiker at NBC; Paul Greenberg, the CBS executive producer who helped work up the graphics with Cronkite; CBS's Dan Rather—no "tailor's dummy"—and Av Westin, the Smith-Reasoner executive producer. For network news, the picture is getting brighter.

**EDWIN DIAMOND**

Edwin Diamond is a lecturer in Political Science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a media critic for the *Post-Newsweek Stations*, and co-director of the Network News Study Group at MIT. Its work is supported by funds from the Markle Foundation and MIT.

## Election coverage '72: 2

### The trials of a one-candidate campaign

"A political strategy of candidate insulation and issue avoidance . . .  
is not simply a press problem, but a public one."

JULES WITCOVER

I am not going to insult your intelligence tonight or impose upon your time by rehashing the issues of the campaign or making any last-minute charges against our opponents. You know what the issues are. . . .

—President Nixon,  
election-eve telecast  
from San Clemente,  
Nov. 6, 1972.

■ With the above statement, Richard M. Nixon concluded the slickest noncampaign for reelection in American presidential history. Supremely confident in the polls' findings that he was on the verge of a landslide victory over Democratic nominee George McGovern, the President ran almost exclusively from the Oval Office of the White House. It was not simply on election eve that he declined to insult the intelligence of the voters or impose upon their time by rehashing the issues; he exercised the same deference throughout the campaign.

In 1967 and 1968, President Lyndon B. Johnson had resorted to tight-security military installations at which to "go out and meet the people." In

1972, President Nixon employed a combination of Cecil B. DeMille mob scenes and invitation-only sessions with Republican leaders to create the impression of "meeting the people" without the necessity of engaging in any dialogue on the issues of the day. To nobody's surprise, the President declined to debate his opponent. Instead, he dispatched a small army of "surrogate candidates."

There were, of course, some valid reasons for the incumbent to limit his campaigning, quite apart from his standing in the polls. Congress remained in session and there were Administration proposals to be pushed; negotiations on the Vietnam War, we learned in late October, had reached a particularly sensitive stage; one assassination attempt already had been made against a presidential candidate, by a man who later was found to have stalked the President. But all these were rationales for a political strategy of candidate insulation and issue avoidance that was relentless in concept and implementation.

The immediate victim of the Nixon noncampaign strategy was, obviously, McGovern. As he dashed about the country through September and early October, the lack of opposition on the stump drew the press more than usual to his own cam-

---

Jules Witcover of the *Los Angeles Times* writes regularly from Washington for the *Review*.



paign. It was, as the cliché went, "the only show in town," and McGovern found himself under scrutiny as perhaps few other presidential candidates had been.

(Often the coverage was stifling. For example, with the advent of the tape recorder in the hands of print reporters as well as their electronic brethren, the McGovern campaign plane became a kind of audio mine field. Every time McGovern walked to the rear press section, which was less and less often as the campaign progressed, his every casual word was being recorded through microphones thrust in his face. The tape recorder without doubt has been a boon to accuracy in dealing with politicians prone to say something one minute and deny having said it the next. But the price often is loss of the kind of informal accessibility that contributes much insight.)

The net effect of the concentrated reporting on McGovern's organization troubles, says Lawrence M. O'Rourke, Washington bureau chief of the *Philadelphia Bulletin*, "was to take the pressure off Nixon to respond on issues." Also, says James McManus, White House correspondent for Westinghouse Broadcasting, "McGovern campaigning alone was most effective to Nixon's strategy, to make McGovern run against a working President. . . . There was something ludicrous about it, as if he was trying to unseat not a man but an institution."

Because McGovern was the only presidential candidate in the field, not only the man but all aspects of his campaign underwent examination beyond that to which most previous candidates had been subjected. Stories of staff conflict abounded. McGovern, a man with almost limitless willingness to absorb punishment in silence, finally reacted. In mid-October, he told a conference of United Press International editors:

"It is the responsibility of the candidates to point the way, each according to his own vision. And if a candidate fails this responsibility—if he offers no vision and no plans—if he runs for the most powerful office in America by running away from the issues—then the success or failure of the system depends even more on the press of the country.

"The work of the press is hardest when it is most important. When a candidate issues press re-

leases but holds no press conferences, it is up to the reporters to inform the country that he is hiding. When a candidate tells a lie to a hand-picked crowd, it is up to reporters to tell the country the truth. And when a candidate will not give answers, it is up to the reporters to keep asking questions—or to keep reminding the people of what they would ask if the candidate would come within shouting distance."

In the face of an opponent who did not campaign, McGovern's frustration was understandable. But what Nixon did or did not do could not lessen the press' responsibility to cover the McGovern campaign. "Whenever a politician is traveling 65,000 miles around the country with a plane-load of reporters," says Richard Harwood, assistant managing editor of the *Washington Post*, "whether there's anybody out there running against him or not, he's going to get close scrutiny. McGovern didn't get overscrutinized, Nixon got underscrutinized."

Richard Dudman, Washington bureau chief of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, says his paper actually cut back on coverage of McGovern to balance campaign coverage. But that was not a very satisfactory solution, he acknowledges. Most other major papers that had decided to staff both candidates continued to cover McGovern. "We were aware of the imbalance," says Robert Boyd, Washington bureau chief of the *Knight Newspapers*, "but I didn't think it was our problem if one of the candidates didn't choose to campaign." Some resources were diverted to other kinds of campaign stories, he says; and in retrospect, heavier coverage of the Nixon reelection committee might have been warranted.

McGovern's complaint obviously reflected his own partisanship and his own problem. But he was raising a point of real concern to reporters and news organizations whose job was to help prepare the electorate for the decision it would have to make on Nov. 7. In planning for the 1972 campaign, most of the larger newspapers had developed a team concept, one group on the Democratic side, one on the Republican. With 1968 in mind, plans were made to look beyond the most visible elements of the campaign.

Everyone was mindful of Joe McGinniss' *The*

*Selling of the President 1968*, which had provided a biting insight into the Nixon media campaign. The *New York Times*, for example, gave Warren Weaver, Jr., of its Washington bureau a year-long assignment of monitoring the media. He produced many informative and revealing stories about the use of TV and radio in the primary elections. When it came to the general election, however, he and others found that the Nixon signals had been changed. There was no pro-Nixon media blitz. Instead there were some devastating anti-McGovern commercials attributed to Democrats for Nixon (but part of the overall Nixon reelection committee budget) and a shift from TV as the prime effort to voter-identification and turnout through canvassing and computerized direct mail.

The resulting combination of no candidate on the stump and no candidate on TV compounded the frustration of reporters assigned to cover Nixon. "They kept telling us that Nixon might be out campaigning momentarily," says Tom Littlewood of the *Chicago Sun-Times*' Washington bureau. "First they used Congress as a reason for not going out, then there were the vetoes. There was always the prospect of tomorrow, and it kept us immobilized."

Meanwhile, of course, Nixon had to be covered as working President. Many White House reporters were careful to look at all presidential actions and pronouncements for their political ramifications. When the Democratic challenger made a policy speech on drugs and the heroin trade, and Nixon immediately tried to upstage him with a White House announcement on drugs, recalls David Kraslow, assistant managing editor of the *Washington Star-News*, his paper pointed out the political relationship between the two. Dan Rather, CBS' White House correspondent, took to signing off his reports by saying he was "with the Nixon campaign at the White House"; the *Washington Post*, faced with a presidential statement or action with a clear political tinge, ran the story on an inside political page.

Reporters were free to ask any question at the daily briefings of presidential press secretary Ronald Ziegler. As always, though, he was a stone wall against any inquiry that might breed trouble or

embarrassment for his boss. On one occasion, Ziegler was asked—and turned aside—some twenty-nine questions on the bugging of the Democratic National Committee; on another occasion, more than sixty questions on the subject of political espionage and sabotage were similarly parried. Some newspapers such as the *Boston Globe* and the *Washington Post* took to running the Q-and-A when it became particularly ludicrous, but the answers at Ziegler's press conferences became no more substantive as a result of publication.

Clark Mollenhoff of the *Des Moines Register* and *Tribune*, formerly a colleague of Ziegler's on the White House staff, used the briefing one day to accuse Ziegler of lying when he denied a Mollenhoff story quoting Ziegler that the Nixon reelection committee had financed the Watergate episode. Later he expressed dismay that no other reporters had joined him in his questioning. The White House regulars, Mollenhoff says, were "gutless" because they didn't press Ziegler hard or often enough.

O'Rourke of the *Philadelphia Bulletin* says: "It's a tough system to crack, but we had an obligation to try to crack it. We fell for the Nixon technique: You don't ask questions you anticipate you won't get an answer to; you get a nonanswer and there is great reluctance to press hard on substantive issues. We did do it a few times, but my experience with Nixon was we just let him get away. They threw these radio talks at us and I doubt many of us really read them. After you've read it, who do you go to for answers?"

Had Nixon campaigned more extensively in the 1972 campaign, it is highly questionable whether the press would have had any easier time getting answers. Even in 1968, when he was not the President, Nixon as a campaigner was carefully insulated from press interrogation. On the few occasions when he did campaign this fall it was much more a presidential extravaganza than a candidate's tour. When he visited Westchester County, New York, one day in October, there were seven press buses in the motorcade. Most reporters, out of view, had to rely on a play-by-play account piped into the buses from a pool reporter riding behind Nixon's car.

Dan Rather, CBS White House correspondent, says there were a few occasions along the way where it would have been possible to thrust a microphone in the President's face and ask him a tough question, and perhaps this should have been tried more. But, Rather notes, it is easy for him to brush past, and there is always the danger that such a thrust will be counterproductive, compounding an already negative public attitude toward newsgatherers.

Irvin Horowitz, assistant national news editor of the New York *Times* and coordinator of the paper's 1972 political coverage, acknowledges that

---

### "Cut back on McGovern coverage to balance . . ."

---

he never resolved the problem of balance in the one-candidate campaign. "I worried about it for three months," he says. "In the interest of fairness and balance you wanted to do something. But when you have one campaign completely open and the other side tighter than a clam, what do you do?" The *Times* had its White House correspondent, Robert B. Semple, covering Nixon as President and candidate, and Linda Charlton of the Washington bureau covering the reelection committee. But a major problem, Horowitz said, was the inaccessibility not simply of the President but also of his chief campaign advisers.

"It started in Miami Beach with the orchestrated convention," he says. "I don't know how you could have got at it."

The *Times*, Horowitz says, planned its coverage on the theory that "you cover 1972 with 1968 in mind. But it was a different ballgame. We set out to cover both campaigns—not the campaigners, but the campaigns." Two four-member teams, Democratic and Republican, were organized. It soon became clear, however, that there wasn't enough for four people to do on the Republican side, he says. Several organizations, including the

*Times*, the *Post*, *Newsweek*, and *Time*, did cover Agnew fulltime or nearly so, and papers like the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Washington Star-News* assigned reporters to him irregularly because he was a legitimate newsmaker on his own, as well as a likely source of Administration policy statements when the President was not campaigning. Though most national reporters gave surrogate candidates short shrift, the device paid off for the Republicans locally in good newspaper and TV coverage wherever they campaigned. Rather acknowledges that on network TV, too, the surrogate candidate device often worked because there was a conscious desire to provide balance with the McGovern campaign; not every day, but over the long run.

There were some enterprising efforts to cover aspects of the Nixon candidacy off the campaign trail. James McCartney of the Knight Newspapers' Washington bureau, for example, explored the Nixon Administration's use of government contract awards in key states; Saul Friedman of the same bureau uncovered the use of a State Department mailing list in dispensing anti-McGovern literature; Morton Mintz of the *Washington Post*, among others, investigated campaign contributors. Major publications assigned reporters to investigate attempts at political subversion. The *Post* team of Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, particularly, pursued the story relentlessly. But the insulation of the Nixon reelection coordinators submerged even this explosive issue. And, as noted by Ben H. Bagdikian elsewhere in this issue, the overwhelming majority of news organizations contributed nothing.

McManus of Westinghouse says broadcasting particularly "failed to come to grips" with the campaign off the candidates' stump. "There should have been some major effort to try to define the issues," he says, "but hoopla took precedence. We endeavored to cover the campaign like an ordinary campaign. We should have backed off the day-to-day stuff and got to the issues." Rather says efforts to do this, such as a report on Nixon media campaigning in 1972 compared to 1968, often were shunted aside by the pressures to provide visual balance between the candidates.

Though there was widespread frustration, re-

porters disagreed about the implications of this type of campaign. Dudman says, "I've always thought what Adlai Stevenson used to say: that a campaign is an educational opportunity. I can appreciate that the President, for quite understandable reasons, would want to avoid a discussion of some issues. But when readers and we as professionals are denied the opportunity in a campaign to hear and question him, the system is not served."

But Harwood says, "A campaign is an opportunity for people to discover a politician, what he believes, what he stands for, and how he performs under pressure. In Nixon's case, we've been observing this man for twenty-five years. . . . I don't think the country was deprived of knowledge of Richard Nixon this year."

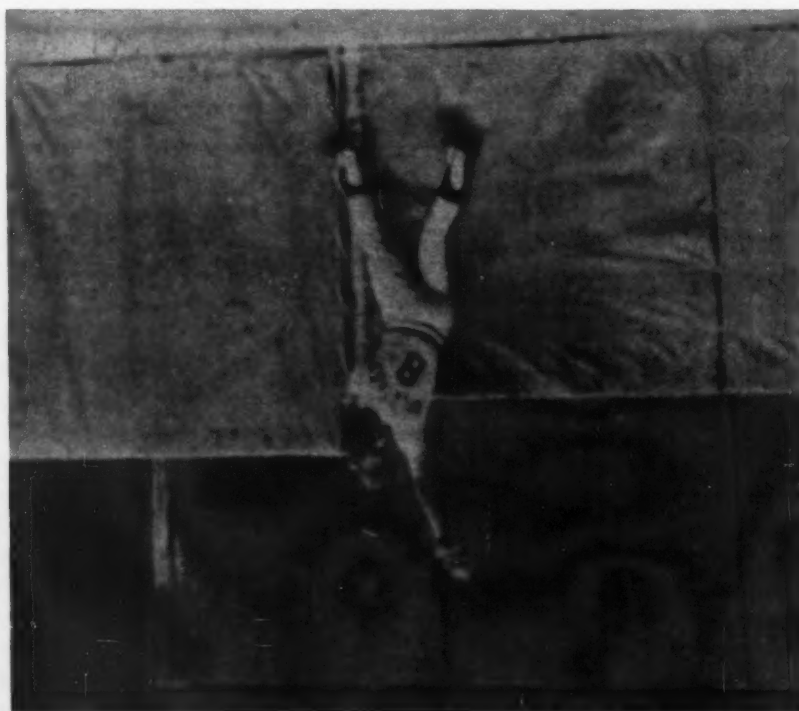
In any event, few see the same problem cropping up in 1976, when Nixon will be a lame duck. Nor is it likely in the future that another first-

term incumbent running for reelection would stay off the stump and off TV as much as Nixon did without the kind of overwhelmingly favorable polls that this incumbent enjoyed.

Concerning 1972, it can be argued that it really didn't matter that one of the candidates declined to go out and meet the people, considering the one-sidedness of the election. But if a primary purpose of the campaign is a confrontation on current issues, if it is to be more than a contest of images, then to methodically circumvent such a confrontation is an act of contempt toward the system itself, and toward the voters. The press can survive the frustrations of a one-candidate presidential campaign. But any development that inhibits the informing of the electorate, in the one season every four years when above all other times it is likely to be listening, is not simply a press problem, but a public one.

**Leap  
to  
remember**

—Baltimore Sun,  
July 8.



**Texas Ranger outfielder Dick Billings leaps high at the left field fence to rob Paul**

Sundays photo—Carl D. Harris  
**Blair of home run in this first inning play. Rangers edged Orioles, 5-4.**



"Most pollsters will insist, using all sorts of research data, that bandwagon effects do not occur. . . . But it is not that simple."

STEPHEN ISAACS

### Were polls overemphasized?

■ George McGovern's people were furious; they thought the polls—and the media's overeager dissemination of them—helped do in their man. The pollsters were gloating, they maintained that they weren't really in the business of predicting, but they all wore smiles as if they had done something right, and a few were saying isn't it lovely that they ended up almost on the nose?

This was the Year of the Poll. What role did the media play in it? A major one, if you listen to McGovern's national political director, Frank Mankiewicz, who occasionally used to be a journalist himself. The reporters, says Mankiewicz, let the polls do their work for them:

"Every question that McGovern was asked had to do not with what the reporters had discovered but what they'd read in the polls. Like, 'how do you account for the fact that you're not getting the student vote?' Well, you know, it's bull . . . , and it always was bull . . . , and you wound up getting the student vote."

Mankiewicz has particularly harsh words for pollster Daniel Yankelovich, whose findings in sixteen major states were used by *Time* magazine

and the *New York Times*. Yankelovich's surveys, declares Mankiewicz, were frequently wrong, and became self-fulfilling. "Yankelovich," says Mankiewicz, "was saying right from the beginning, as *Time* says, that it must have been very damaging to McGovern to learn that people thought Richard Nixon was more trustworthy. He didn't learn that; he learned that Yankelovich said it. But as far as *Time* was concerned that meant they did and so that affected all the things they wrote.

"It's self-fulfilling in terms of the people who pay for the polls—*Time* and the *New York Times*—by Yankelovich. And their cost accountants tell them that they must act on his findings or it's not worth the money they're paying him. They not only print it, but they analyze the news in terms of the 'truth' of what he says."

Yankelovich's findings particularly hurt among voting segments like blue-collar workers, Mankiewicz asserts. How, he asks, can "a guy tell you McGovern has no appeal to blue-collar workers, in the face of the primary results which showed him getting all kinds of blue-collar votes? You don't then say, 'Now, tell us why he's not getting blue-collar votes' because, if you keep on promoting that . . . he won't get blue-collar votes.

"I'm not suggesting that we'd have won the elec-

---

Stephen Isaacs is the New York correspondent of the *Washington Post*.

tion if the polls had been better," Mankiewicz continues, but he notes that from the outset poll results had devastating impact on McGovern's efforts to raise money. "They were very damaging to morale, too, in terms of volunteer workers, manning headquarters, getting people out into the street canvassing. They turned people off very early."

How valid are Mankiewicz's criticisms?

Most pollsters will insist, using all sorts of research data, that bandwagon effects do not occur; if anything, they maintain, lopsided races tend to narrow at the end. But it is not that simple. If polls show one candidate extremely far behind, all the mechanisms of his campaign can suffer—mechanisms that could, in the absence of negative poll results, possibly raise his standing. This is perhaps most apparent in the raising of money, an especially important factor in a nation where TV exposure is so costly but so essential for a challenger—particularly in a year such as 1972, when one candidate's absence from the stump prevented the normal joining of issues.

The experience of Lawrence Goldberg, director of the Jewish voters section of the Committee to Reelect the President, illustrates this. "In the past," he says, "all we were really going for among Jews was money—not really the vote. We knew we couldn't get it. This time it was different, and it had a strange effect on the money. In the past, sometimes it was hard to raise money from a wealthy guy, because he felt he was out there on a limb. But this time the polls were showing him that he wasn't alone; you might say, he wasn't an oddball; the underlayer agreed with him."

Accuracy in polling and sophistication in reporting on polls therefore are crucial. On the former count, major pollsters have reason for satisfaction about 1972. Harris (whose final survey showed 61 to 39) and Gallup (62-38) both looked good against the 61 to 37 result. Among other surveys, the Chicago *Sun-Times*' straw poll (25,000 man-in-the-street tabulations) probably could claim national honors: the *Sun-Times* called 59.8 per cent for Nixon in Illinois; he finished at 59.3. Its chief competitor, the *Tribune*, did its own polling for the first year and predicted a result of 62 per cent (which, in the polling business, isn't signif-

icantly off). But the *Tribune*'s survey reckoned the gubernatorial race awry: It said incumbent Gov. Richard Ogilvie would defeat Daniel Walker, 53 to 47 per cent. The *Sun-Times*' final figures were Ogilvie 51, Walker 49—designated too close to call. Walker won, with 50.8 per cent of the statewide vote.

Another miscall occurred in the Iowa Senatorial election, where the Des Moines *Register*'s Iowa Poll said Jack Miller would defeat Dick Clark by 5 points, 52 to 47. In that upset, Clark won resoundingly, 54.6 per cent to 44.7 per cent.

In the face of all the polls giving Nixon a huge lead, the Boston *Globe*'s poll, by Becker Research, went against the trend, showing a 10-point lead for McGovern in Massachusetts. His winning margin there was exactly 10 percentage points.

Frank Mankiewicz to the contrary, the news media in 1972 seem to have made better and more sophisticated use of poll data than ever before. The majority of them seemed to better understand the whole business of survey research, and in general were discreet enough to inform their watchers and readers that polls are just that, and not elections—that they are subject to variables.

A great many newspapers which had been noticeably naïve in handling polls earlier in the year [see "The Pitfalls of Polling," May/June, 1972] started delving into basic guidelines recommended by the National Council on Public Polls. One paper, the New York *Post*, published a six-part series on polls, a skillful analysis by feature writer Jerry Tallmer. The series, says features editor Joseph Rabinovich, was originated by publisher Dorothy Schiff. "A lot of people remembered the '48 polls and other polls and they just couldn't believe the massive gap this time," says Rabinovich. "So we figured we'd look into the history of the polls and what the present pollsters are like, how they work, and also try to get some opinion on their possible influence. . . ."

Another paper, the Brattleboro, Vt., *Reformer*, now even goes so far as to publish a bold-face preface atop every article it uses on polls, explaining which NCPP standards the poll meets and where it fails to meet them. Norman Runnion, editor of the *Reformer*, says he feels "the point

*continued on page 39*







# Financing Public TV

SUPPLEMENT TO COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 1973

WILBUR SCHRAMM  
LYLE NELSON

From the day in 1953 when the nation's first "educational television" station limped onto the air in Houston, those closest to public television in the U.S. have warned that inadequate financing posed the biggest single obstacle to its continued growth and stability. Now, it would seem, the system—and the nation—are reaping the harvest of years of financial neglect. The national program service, largely supported by annual appropriations to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and by foundations, is struggling to stay alive under increasingly severe attacks from several quarters. Local stations are experiencing financial problems which have stymied development in many cases and have been seriously crippled in others.

## A Decade of Growth

The growth of noncommercial television during the Sixties far outran even the most optimistic predictions. Noncommercial television went into the decade with a few more than fifty stations, and at the end of the decade was just passing 200. It was available to twice as many people, and on a nationwide basis offered over six times as many broadcast hours, many of them in color. More importantly, it accepted the challenge of a new and more professional standard of programming, and was

---

Wilbur Schramm is Janet M. Peck Professor of International Communication (emeritus) at Stanford, where he also directs the Institute for Communication Research. Lyle Nelson heads the Department of Communication at Stanford. They were assisted in this study by graduate students Trevor Brown and Bruce McKay. The text was adapted from a report for the Aspen Program on Communications and Society. The complete text is available for \$2 from Communications and Society, 770 Welch Rd., Palo Alto, Calif. 94304. © Aspen Program on Communications and Society.

able to present a national program service of high quality offered first through National Educational Television, and later through Public Broadcasting Service.

Financially, the decade of growth saw a capital investment of more than \$150 million, a near-tripling of employees (to 5,385 fulltime and 2,257 part-time in 1970), and a multiplication of annual operating budgets by a factor of more than five.

Not only did the system grow internally but it reached more and more viewers. By the end of 1971, CPB reports, over 51 million Americans were tuning in to public television programs each week.

In spite of this spectacular expansion, however, one statement in the 1961 U.S. Office of Education report, *ETV: The Next Ten Years*, remains unchanged: "Educational television is in financial difficulty."

## Public Television Today

It needs to be remembered at the outset that only about 15 per cent of television program transmission in this country is public television, and less than 5 per cent of the money for support of television goes into this form of broadcasting. Even more significant are the differing rates of growth. The revenue of PTV stations increased by about 143 per cent between 1966 and 1971 (46 per cent of that in the last year, and part of that due to the transfer of National Educational Television operations to New York station WNET). But the number of stations also increased 83 per cent during the same period. As a result, the mean expenditure per station increased only 36 per cent during a period when inflation alone would have raised expenditures by 25 per cent. For the average station, therefore, the increase was insufficient to provide for technical improvements, much less to expand local

program services or embark on color conversion projects.

It should also be noted that although there were significant increases in 1971, many stations still bear the scars of their 1966-1970 struggles. During that period, station income increased 78 per cent but the number of stations went up 73 per cent, so that the average station was able to spend only 8 per cent more at the end of the period than in 1966.

A further consideration in assessing the fiscal condition of public television is the different types of ownership of noncommercial VHF and UHF stations in the United States. Essentially, there are four ownership groups: community, school system, state and municipal, and university stations.

It is significant that 59 (27 per cent) of the 212 public television stations on the air as of Nov. 1, 1971 were responsible for 55 per cent of the total national coverage of PTV, 57 per cent of the local programming expenditures, and probably at least half of the total public television audience. These are the "community" stations, licensed to nonprofit organizations, mostly in large cities. During the day they typically provide services for local school systems and children's programming. In the evening they offer a varied program service for the community.

Of the 212 total, twenty-three stations were licensed to local school systems, these stations representing about 9 per cent of the national coverage. Their primary function is to provide instructional programs as needed by the schools, with "public television" being something of a bonus.

The sixty-eight state and municipally-owned stations made up 32 per cent of the total, with many

---

### *"Significant scars of their 1966-1970 struggles . . ."*

---

of these linked together in state networks. Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oklahoma, and South Carolina are among the states with such state networks. Typically these networks have one or two production centers, the other stations serving chiefly to transmit programs from a central source.

The chief responsibility of university stations is usually to the extension services of their institutions. They also attempt, insofar as resources permit, to provide for local public affairs programming in the evening in addition to carrying the national service.

Community stations typically operate at a level of about \$1 million annually; the other types of

stations at about half that. Community stations put correspondingly larger sums into local production and, of the four types of PTV stations, they come closest to a goal of general interest. This is not only because they are responsible for much of the national program service, but also because they are required to serve large heterogeneous communities. School stations are primarily responsive to the needs of their school systems, state stations to the needs of the state units that established them, and university stations to the needs of university extension and continuing education objectives.

Each of the types of stations has had its own financial problems related to its own major sources of support. But the various types of stations have had one problem in common: uncertainty.

About two-thirds of the support of public television comes from tax sources. Much of this is from local school systems, local and state governments, and state universities, with a relatively small part coming from federal funds. School, state and municipal, and university stations derive more than 80 per cent of their income from state and local tax funds. Only the community stations receive any considerable portion of their income from private sources (in 1971, roughly 55 per cent). It is chiefly these community stations that have developed television auctions into a major source of support and have built up substantial lists of PTV subscribers. It is chiefly to the community stations also that foundation grants and production contracts have gone, although university stations have received substantial sums from foundations since 1966.

It is especially interesting to compare programming for schools with "general" PTV programming in terms of the proportions of broadcast hours contributed by the various sources. For example, of the school programs (which on the average represented about one-third of the time of PTV stations), about 30 per cent came from national sources: from PBS, NET, and the program libraries. Another 15 per cent came from regional networks, regional interconnection, and other stations, with about 36 per cent made locally. On the other hand, only about 16 per cent of general PTV programs represented local production. More than half came from the PBS interconnection and the distribution services. About 13 per cent of the general programming resulted from regional and station exchange.

Why is the proportion of local school programming so much higher than the proportion of local general programming? For one thing, because school systems feel strongly about their own special needs, the unique qualities of their own curricula, and the requirements of their own students and teachers. A second reason is the historically greater cost of general PTV programming. Although instructional television holds great potential for making very significant contributions to education in this country, to date relatively modest levels of production have been considered acceptable. Non-school programs, however, are compared directly

with the production quality of the national commercial networks. Many commercial network prime-time programs cost in the neighborhood of \$200,000 per hour. In contrast, local nonschool PTV production usually costs less than \$5,000 an hour, with the bulk of national PTV production ranging between \$25,000 and \$75,000 an hour.

These figures illustrate why a PTV station, whose total annual production budget would not be enough to produce two hours of commercial network prime time programming, relies so heavily on its ability to share a core of high-quality programs with other PTV stations. In essence, this is the function which PBS and other distribution services perform. A public station can count on filling twenty or more hours of its air time per week, including repeats, with quality programs for which it has to pay none of the production costs directly.

The significant fact is that although broadcast

---

*"\$266 million  
required in annual  
new funding . . ."*

---

time rose during the last decade, the hours and proportion of local programming fell steadily from 1962 through 1970. Why? For one thing, because public television has been seeking a higher standard of quality. In the early years of the medium, any instructional television in the classroom was considered better than none, and any public television on the picture tube at home was better than not having public television at all. But the novelty of the medium wore off. Something rather special in quality, comparable to the speciality of the subject matter, came to be demanded.

Alone among the public television stations, the community licensees have been able to generate any considerable private support, and even they have not received appreciable support from business and industry. There is a ceiling on the amount of such support in a culture that believes it does not have to pay, at least directly, for television. Both businesses and individuals have been feeling the economic pinch. As a result, some community stations report that their membership renewal rates are down and that other sources of private gifts also are off. Moreover, the other major sources of support—school systems, state and local governments, and universities—have also been hard hit. Similarly, federal, state, and city governments have struggled with rising costs of social welfare and governmental services. Universities, unable in many cases even to raise their own faculty and staff sal-

aries, have found it virtually impossible to increase allocations to their television stations.

Further complicating the problem has been the high proportion of relatively fixed costs in this type of enterprise. The costs of simply keeping the station on the air, which some smaller stations account for almost half of all expenditures, are not elastic. As a consequence, virtually the only cuts that can be made are in staff and in funds available for direct costs of local programming. Regardless of how a station makes these cuts in expenditures, the result is a cut in local programming, and most particularly the special things—remote coverage of an event or a meeting, a new program, a few hours on the air that might be used for special interest programming, a larger budget for program talent and studio sets, etc.

As a result, stations have come to depend more and more upon the programs provided by PBS interconnection, by the regional and state networks, and by other distribution services. But these national and regional sources also have felt the economic pinch. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which is now the largest single source of program support, had roughly \$10 million for programs and \$5 million for station support in 1971. (The remainder of its \$27.8 million budget went chiefly for live interconnection, support of public radio, program promotion, and administration.) Even if this entire \$15 million were divided among 200 stations for local programming, it would provide only approximately fifteen hours of local programming per station per year at \$5,000 an hour—the present cost of a starkly simple panel discussion program produced by station KQED in San Francisco. Or, at the most, it would provide one hour a week of very low-cost programming.

In summary, the average public television station—whether depending upon private community support or state or local tax dollars—has had to contend with rising costs, rising appetites for quality programming, rising demands to serve special groups and to help in meeting local problems, rising needs to modernize facilities (color, more adequate studio and remote coverage facilities, improved signals and VHF channels where possible)—all with no corresponding rise in support.

### **Assumptions and Cost Projections**

Any responsible approach to national policy with respect to public television requires a hard look at the potential long-range financial commitments involved. A number of estimates have been made by individuals, and there have been three rather comprehensive attempts to arrive at precise figures—by Arthur D. Little and Associates for the Carnegie Commission, by economists engaged by the Ford Foundation, and by a government task force on financing public television.

In general, these studies have used an approach based on the number of PTV stations required to



serve the majority of American households (usually 90 to 95 per cent), the costs of interconnection of these stations, and the amount required to provide a national program service for this "network." Because of this approach, they have been criticized for being "station" oriented, and for not taking into account the potential of other perhaps more cost-effective alternatives such as CATV and videocassettes.

The highest of these estimates places the total annual expenditure in the neighborhood of \$750 million, including all affiliated costs, with approximately another \$250 million needed for regionally produced programming and interconnection—a \$1-billion-a-year total. This estimate, it should be pointed out, assumes complete interconnection of all stations, and a general level of program expenditure and administration roughly equivalent to current commercial network operations.

In his analysis for the Ford Foundation, Joseph Pechman of the Brookings Institution estimated an annual requirement of approximately \$200 million (at 1967 prices) for a *minimum* national service. Most other estimates have ranged between these two figures, although some—based on different assumptions about the number of stations and the amount and kind of local production—have been lower.

The most widely quoted and certainly the most detailed estimate is that of the Carnegie Commission in its 1967 report, *Public Television: A Program for Action*. Assuming 380 stations (of which about

170 would be "repeater" types with no production facilities), the Commission estimated annual total costs of \$270 million at 1967 prices (amounting to about \$338 million in 1972 dollars). This estimate covers annual operating costs, including capital depreciation and replacement, and is in addition to a basic capital outlay requirement of \$621 million.

It needs to be emphasized that these are *total* system costs. Based on 1971 total station revenue of \$142 million, this would leave approximately \$200 million required in new annual funding.

Several assumptions in the Carnegie Commission report can be questioned, chief among them the total number of stations required. That report, like

---

**"No necessity  
that funding be on an  
uncertain basis . . ."**

---

most approaches to the costing question, seems dominated by the broadcast station concept. A noncommercial broadcast station is assumed to be the most effective and most economical method of providing public television to most communities, an understandable assumption given the stage of development at the time the estimates were made.

Now, however, this approach does not account for the emerging importance of CATV and videocassettes or the long-range potential of direct reception from satellites. Nor does it give adequate consideration to the local programming resources and needs of individual communities. Given these factors, along with the problems which have arisen from permitting uncontrolled expansion of stations (especially in areas where new stations duplicate the services of existing ones), it seems reasonable that the number of additional stations needed may well be quite small—perhaps thirty to fifty more than the 224 presently on the air.

Our approach to cost estimating begins with consideration of the service itself: what kind of noncommercial television service would best meet the public interest, in what quantity and quality, and in what kind of a mix between national, regional, and local programming. From there we move to the question of how best to organize and deliver such a service.

Implicit in this approach are two basic assumptions: a noncommercial television service of some kind is desirable, even necessary, as an alternative to the programming which is available on a strictly commercial television system, and the nation can well afford such a system. In fact, it can ill afford

#### Television Service Costs by Country

SERVICE	\$ TOTAL	PER PERSON EXPENDITURE
CBC (Canada) TV, 1970/71		
All CBC TV expenditures, including commercial programming*	\$ 166,583,800	\$ 7.70
BBC (UK) TV, 1970/71 (Totally noncommercial)	183,241,000	3.29
NHK (Japan) TV, 1971/72	300,000,000	2.90
U.S. Commercial TV Station and Network revenues, 1970	2,808,200,000	13.71
Network revenues only, 1971	1,487,500,000	7.32
U.S. Public TV		
Total System Revenues, fiscal 1971	165,632,100	.80
PTV Station Revenues, fiscal 1971	141,982,200	.69
CPB Federal Appropriation, fiscal 1972	35,000,000	.17

\* The CBC TV networks operate as commercial services for parts of each broadcast day, earning \$42.8 million toward system costs. Parliament grants support of \$166 million.



not to have such a system, given the increasing complexities of our society and the need for a well-informed population.

For an annual U.S. public television budget of, say, \$400 million, the costs would be less than \$2 per capita. It would seem difficult indeed to argue that such an expenditure would create a national hardship, faced with the fact that the Canadian Government provides close to \$6 per capita annually for public television, and the British Government over \$3 per capita. The 1971-72 CPB federal appropriation amounted to 17 cents per person, a figure that suffers in comparison not only with the support levels in other countries but also—and perhaps even more dramatically—with the close to \$14 per person which U.S. commercial television costs annually.

It is significant that only about one in five of all the countries in the world which have television in some form—and virtually none of the major ones—relies solely on a private ownership system. Government ownership predominates, but significantly about two-thirds of the nations depend upon some form of mixed private and public ownership.

To accept the proposition that some form of noncommercial television service is needed is not in any way to deprecate the contribution of commercial television. Far from it. Were there only publicly-supported television in the United States, we would argue just as forcefully, and from the same position, that a strong commercial network or networks were needed to provide flexibility and freedom of choice in a field so significant in its impact.

Another basic assumption which underlies our approach to the kind of national PTV service needed (and thus to how much it will cost) is that a large measure of local independence and control are desirable policy objectives. To meet the diverse needs of communities and population groups across the nation, instead of attempting to appeal to the broadest possible mass audience, public television needs to program with special attention to minority preferences of all kinds.

However, it should be quickly added that these comments do *not* argue against a national service. They argue for diversity and flexibility, which in the long run means achieving a balance between strong and effective national programming and equally strong and effective regional and local programming. If there has been a trend toward "centralization," it seems clear that the primary reason has been one of financial necessity.

That a major share of prime-time PTV programming will continue to come through a national service, and should continue to be so provided, is a proposition with which few will disagree. Only through such a service can PTV provide programs of exceptional quality which, for lack of funds or locally available resources, individual stations themselves cannot produce.

Furthermore, there are *national* resources which

need to be shared with all Americans. There is a national heritage which belongs to all the people, and there are national and international problems, policies, and decisions which demand the widest possible understanding and participation. A national service planned by, for, and with the stations it serves is the cornerstone upon which rests the entire public television structure. Without it, local public TV (but not necessarily instructional TV) would probably collapse in all but a few cases.

The argument for investment in a national program service from a cost-effectiveness point of view is equally persuasive. A dollar spent on a national service will raise quality a great deal higher for more audiences than the same dollar divided among stations for local programming.

Regional programming, that significant resource once hailed as "the most promising development since the inauguration of ETV" (in the U.S. Office of Education report, *ETV: The Next Ten Years*), has largely been overlooked or brushed aside in most projections of PTV needs and costs. There are now five "regional" networks and nine state networks. They range from the extensive Eastern Educational Television Network (EEN) with its thirty-two member stations to state networks of four or five stations as in New Hampshire and Georgia. In the case of these regional networks, there are sometimes several primary production stations although in many of the state networks the system is fed by programs originated at one central source.

Strong local program services also are essential. Yet it is local programming that has suffered most from the financial constraints under which public

---

### *"An entirely new level of funding is required . . ."*

---

television has operated since its inception in 1953. According to statistics compiled by the CPB, the average PTV station now produces roughly 4.5 hours of local programs per week, exclusive of instructional programming. (Some, especially the larger community stations, produce more whereas others originate no programming at all.)

It is clear that in the next decade cable television will grow in importance and have a profound impact on television service of all kinds. Further, home video playback devices, and perhaps even direct reception from satellites in the more distant future, are likely to influence the shape and size of whatever public television system exists in five or ten years.

Given these considerations, the concept of a na-

tionwide network of broadcast stations linked by an elaborate interconnection system may be neither realistic nor economical. Already the compulsion to "fill in the gaps" (in the map of PTV coverage of the United States) has resulted in new stations coming on the air in areas where they largely duplicate the coverage of existing PTV stations and where there are few or no community resources, financial or program, to support the operation.

What is required for a rational judgment—and on this point there is virtually unanimous agreement ranging from members of Congress to station managers—is a national "master plan" which will establish guidelines for determining and implementing

---

**"An effective  
service hangs in  
the balance . . ."**

---

the most economical and effective method of providing a public television service to the greatest number of citizens in any given locality.

### Operating Cost Estimate

Based on the considerations and assumptions set forth in the preceding pages, we conclude that a *minimum* national program service consisting of at least twenty-four hours of new programming per week, exclusive of "repeats" and daytime children's programming, is desirable. In addition, the cost projections which follow provide for an average of approximately six hours of quality local and regional programming, to be encouraged by direct national support to stations and regional production units.

Additional provisions which would not affect the overall cost estimates might well enhance balance, diversity, and responsiveness to local realities. Stations might, for instance, be limited to the use of a given proportion—say 75 per cent—of the national program service. Subscription fees might be established for the national service, scaled to produce, as an example, sufficient funds to support the public affairs portion of the service. Such a provision would tend to remove, at least by one step, control of the vital public affairs area from the appropriations process, and it would also help to insure responsiveness to local needs and wishes.

Given these priorities, what would be the total national bill for a minimum nationwide public television service of the kind contemplated? An estimate of the total minimum operating cost for a national public TV service appears in summary form on this page. The total operating cost figure of \$432

million is an all-inclusive one representing all facets of the service. Perhaps more important is the basic incremental cost representing the additional annual funding required—\$266 million—to bring all program services up to a minimum standard. It is significant that these operating costs would average about \$2.07 per person, certainly low when compared to expenditures of other nations.

It is clear that an entirely new level of funding is required if public television is to achieve even its minimum potential of service to the American people. Further, this funding is needed at all levels—local, regional, and national—if a balanced service responsive to diverse needs is to be provided.

Funds for regional production would need to flow through some national organization such as CPB or PBS. Such support could be made available to any group of stations, say five or more, which wanted to cooperate on a series of programs whether or not the stations happened to belong to a formal network organization.

The projected costs, however, do *not* include public radio, which is important and will require separate funding. Nor do they provide for any improvement in instructional television, the assumption being that funds for that purpose will come from other sources directly related to the uses to which such programs are put.

Many projections of the basic capital requirements of a national PTV system have been made

### Summary of Total Annual Minimum Operating Cost, National PTV Service

SERVICE	COST
<i>National Program Service</i>	
Daytime Children's Programming, Regular Season	
Prime-time Programming, Regular Season	
Summer Programming	\$115,200,000
<i>Regional Program Services</i>	
To stimulate regional production. [Assume 10 regional operations]	19,500,000
<i>Local Program Services</i>	
To maintain current services and to upgrade local programming	267,600,000
<i>Innovation Support</i>	8,000,000
<i>Interconnection</i>	12,000,000
<i>Administration, promotion, and research</i>	9,500,000
Estimated Total Annual Minimum Operating Cost	\$431,800,000
Less: Current Total Support	165,600,000
Required Increase in Annual Op- erating Support	\$266,200,000

over the years. The range of these estimates—from a high of \$621 million by the Carnegie Commission to low of \$155 million by NAEB—should emphasize the difficulty encountered in trying to arrive at a reliable figure.

At the end of the 1971 fiscal year, CPB reported that total cumulative expenditures by PTV stations for capital were approximately \$211 million. Federal support, largely through the Educational Broadcasting Facilities Act administered by HEW/USOE, has accounted for over \$67 million of this total.

An area of immediate concern—in our opinion more critical at this time than provision for new stations—is that a considerable number of stations currently on the air are operating with obsolete equipment, some of it in imminent danger of breaking down completely. Many are without color origination or transmission capability, and some still are using equipment purchased when the stations first went on the air in the 1950s. Financial constraints have not allowed stations to make replacements, much less to take advantage of technological advances.

Accordingly, the emphasis should now shift from bringing new stations on the air to upgrading and modernizing those already broadcasting. Certainly the haphazard growth which has characterized the field should be brought into some reasonable order.

We have suggested a leveling off of the number of stations at the 255 to 275 level, with these stations supplemented by perhaps fifty to seventy-five additional "repeater" transmitters. Given the potential impact of new technologies, we are convinced that such a limitation makes sense in terms of the allocation of national resources. Moreover, if a national "master plan" is adopted, we assume that it would reserve most of the new activations (exclusive of repeaters) for the approximately eighteen communities of more than half a million now without PTV service.

Past experience clearly demonstrates the necessity for building into any PTV capital grant program some requirement that stations set up an adequate capital depreciation plan. Otherwise, the system is almost certain to find itself in ten to twenty years in exactly the same predicament as at present: with an obsolete and inefficient physical plant, and with no means (except the federal government) of bringing it up to date.

The most direct method for meeting initial capital needs would be an extension and expansion of the current Educational Broadcasting Facilities program. Another suggestion which has been made is the "development loan bank" approach. The aspect of this approach which appeals to us is the built-in control it would provide over wholesale and uneconomical expansion prompted by the availability of federal grants. If a station or community knew it would have to repay some part of the total cost, even at low interest rates, it would be less inclined to overexpand or to begin a new service duplicating an existing one.

### Why not introduce . . .

#### Receiver license fees for households able to receive public television?

This is a common device in many parts of the world. A study by Arthur D. Little, Inc., in 1970 estimated that an annual fee of approximately \$4.50 per TV household within PTV coverage areas would have generated enough revenue to finance a PTV system. If households with an annual income of less than \$4,000 were excluded from these license fees, the required amount could have been raised by charging approximately \$9 per year. However, the study pointed out a number of arguments against such a plan, and it is easy to add more.

For one thing, it probably would meet immediate opposition from the American public, which is not used to paying for television. Again, the fee would be charged without differentiation between those who view PTV and those who do not. It would also be extremely evasion-prone. Experience in other countries indicates that to undertake collection of such a new tax would be impractical because of the high cost of enforcement relative to the return.

#### A manufacture's excise tax on television receivers?

This tax was first suggested several years ago when the number of color television sets was still very small, and a great amount of receiver replacement was anticipated. This suggests one difficulty with such a tax—that the income is likely to be unstable, high when new technology comes on the market, low at other times. However, it would be a simple tax to collect. Evasion would be difficult, and it would be collected from so relatively few organizations that it could be easily enforced. The serious difficulties are of other kinds.

In the first place, there is not a very satisfactory link between the manufacturer of the set or the purchaser (to whom the tax would probably be passed along) and the persons who would benefit from PTV. In many communities, 25 per cent of all viewers say they never watch PTV, and the amount of viewing of PTV is only a small part of all TV viewing. Furthermore, if the tax were passed on to the purchasers of receivers, it might be argued that the additional cost, though seemingly small, would be sufficient to keep a certain number of disadvantaged families from having television, and thus the possibility of enriching the lives of the poor and the disadvantaged by means of television would be lost. Finally, it is likely that both manufacturers and consumer groups would resist the tax.

Nevertheless, as the Carnegie Commission noted, this particular form of tax may be the most palatable one if it is decided to try to create a trust fund from dedicated revenues. (That Commission recommended an excise tax beginning at 2 and rising to 5 per cent of set cost.)

### Funding

Funding for public television ideally should be adequate to the need, *long-term* to permit planning ahead, and *free from any control* by specific donors over the content of programs. With these requirements in mind, let us examine the most commonly suggested sources of funding.

—Contributions from individuals, businesses, and industry. These amounted to 13.1 per cent of sta-



tion budgets in 1971, and the total is likely to increase as stations decide to or are able to step up fund-raising activities. But this is unlikely to cover a much larger portion of station costs than now.

—*Foundations*—particularly the Ford Foundation—carried a large share of national programming expenses for fifteen years and in 1971 accounted for a little more than 11 per cent of total revenues. But there is little likelihood that foundations can play a much increased role in the financing of PTV.

—*Support from school systems and government below the federal level* amounted to 53.5 per cent of total public TV support in 1971, and the bulk of support for all except the community stations. This source of support will contribute chiefly to school, municipality, state, and state university stations, and to instructional and official services, rather than to general "public television" programming. Support from school systems to community stations, for instructional TV, is subject to (among other factors) school budget fluctuations.

—*Revenue-producing operations* such as sale of advertising, "royalties" from domestic satellites, and rental of studios to independent production companies have been suggested. They are, however, legally and administratively awkward, and unlikely to contribute significantly to increasing PTV income.

—*Dedicated revenue for trust funds* has been discussed for several years, with a manufacturer's tax on receivers perhaps the most palatable of a politically unpopular group of possibilities. For various reasons, including political feasibility, such an option seems unlikely to be adopted in the near future, despite the desirability from many points of view of a trust fund for operating PTV.

Direct appropriation by Congress, therefore, seems to offer the only real possibility for meeting the support needs of public television over the next five years. An amount adequate to PTV's needs can be supplied, and the tax system which provides general revenue funds is not only already in existence but provides perhaps the most equitable possible system for distributing the costs of national public television service. Certainly the source/benefit linkage problems are much less severe, and would diminish as national PTV coverage increases. And the use of the existing taxation system would avoid the "unjust burden" charges that could be levelled against special taxes.

Compared to other possibilities, such Congressional support admittedly offers less hope of real long-term planning, and less freedom from political influence over specific program content. But if Congress so decides, it can provide adequate funding at a minimum national cost.

There is no necessity that this type of funding be

on an uncertain one-year-at-a-time basis. Congress can, if so moved, provide for long-term authorizations and multiple-year appropriations which would permit planning over a longer term while still retaining provisions for annual reviews.

At present, the chief sources of federal support for public television are CPB (for program and general operating support), and HEW/OE (for facilities and equipment grants). With any substantial increase in the level of funding, however, it would seem more efficient to have all funding (both operating and capital grants) flow through a single agency, although that would be a matter of secondary importance once Congress had decided upon a formula for the distribution.

These funding problems can be worked out if Congress, the Administration, and the representatives of public television wish to do so. In considering questions of distribution systems and the extent and method of funding, we must not lose sight of the main goal: to provide a significant informational, cultural, and educational service to the American people—a service which includes not only a strong, dynamic, and effective national component, but vigorous and responsive regional and local services as well.

## Conclusions

We have tried not to advance any single "plan of action" designed to solve all problems. However, we do think that certain conclusions logically and inevitably follow from the data we have reviewed.

—An entirely new level of funding is required if public television is to achieve even its minimal potential for service to the American people.

—The nation can well afford a quality nationwide public television service.

—Support for operations and programming at the local, regional, and national levels must be provided in any plan of financing which is developed.

—The central objective should be the provision of a service, not a concern with how it is delivered.

—The insulation of funding from program control is a necessary and desirable objective, but one which is most difficult to achieve.

Public television today faces what may be the most serious financial problems in its nearly twenty years of existence. Some would argue that whether this nation is to have an effective service of this kind hangs in the balance. It is clearly evident that public television is not making the contribution to the life of this nation which it can, and that this contribution is now being limited primarily by financial constraints. Only the American people, through their elected representatives in Congress and in the Administration, can make the final decisions which will determine the fate of public television in the United States. The implications for the future are enormous. The public interest requires a reasoned, dispassionate, and farsighted approach.







continued from page 30

of the guidelines . . . is not just as guidelines to editors, but as guidelines to the public." Runnion pressured United Press International to get tougher on polls, too.

"We've had caution flags up about polls for any number of elections," says UPI's editor, H. L. Stevenson, "but had not gone into the guidelines specifically about the method of sampling, the questioning, and all that sort of thing. I think the word has been spread." He discussed the guidelines in detail in the *UPI Reporter* and says he believes his U.S. bureaus followed the suggestions.

The Associated Press, which also had not previously informed its staff of the pitfalls and misuses of polling, sent a memorandum to its bureaus

---

## "Sophistication in reporting on polls is crucial . . ."

---

on Aug. 31 doing much the same. "We must be very circumspect," ordered Rene J. Cappon, AP's general news editor, saying "when in doubt, pass."

Burns W. Roper, president of the Roper Organization, believes that newspapers in general adhered to this standard. "I haven't made any scientific analysis of it," he says, "but certainly my impression is the newspapers have done a much more descriptive job, and a more selective job." Robert T. Bower, president of the National Council on Public Polls, concurs.

The pollsters attribute this performance heavily to the attention poll abuses have received. One prime factor, certainly, was the long-pending bill of Rep. Lucien N. Nedzi of Michigan that would require public pollsters to file their basic data with the Library of Congress within seventy-two hours of publication. Nedzi, chairman of the House Administration Subcommittee Investigating Polls, held hearings on his bill in the fall, with such witnesses as Bower, Roper, Yankelovich, and other leaders in survey research.

Use of survey data by some papers was massive. The *Times* first used Yankelovich's firm locally in the 1970 elections, and this year expanded nationwide. During certain key primaries (for example, Florida, Wisconsin, California), Yankelovich interviewers questioned people as they left the polls as to why they had voted the way they did. This data enabled the *Times* to note, two days after the Florida primary, that the real winner there was not George Wallace but Richard Nixon—that the hidden results indicated that the President would win in Florida come November. Soon thereafter, the *Washington Post*, too, jumped into at-the-polls interviewing, hiring Hart Research Associates, again keying on primaries in key states, like Pennsylvania and California.

In both newspapers, the bulk of the results of the voter questioning appeared not with the election results, but the following day, after the data had been completely tabulated and studied. In one exception, the morning after the Wisconsin primary, the *Times* could write preliminarily that the pro-Wallace vote there was marked by the fact that up to half of his votes had come from Republican "crossovers"—a significant fact.

Once the conventions were past, the *Times* contracted with *Time* to share the costs and benefits of the surveys. (*Newsweek*, *Time*'s nearest competitor, regularly uses surveys by the Gallup Organization.) Yankelovich conducted four "waves" of surveys in the sixteen largest electoral vote states—i.e. leaving the national raw percentages to the Harris and Gallup Surveys. These Yankelovich surveys encompassed samples far larger than a normal 1,500-person Gallup sample.

One of the problems with the newspaper-magazine combine was deadlines—*Time* would be scooped on its own data if the *Times* and newspapers subscribing to the *Times*' news service had published all the information in each survey when it was available. So publication lagged considerably after the information was ready. This caused problems: in its Oct. 2 edition, *Time* published results of interviews that began Aug. 25. If surveys are, as the pollsters maintain, only a snapshot of opinion at a particular moment, *Time*'s Oct. 2 snapshot was a bit faded.

The problem was solved in the third wave of

Yankelovich surveys, moving interviews and publication closer, although *Time's* political editors had less time to interpret and write.

The *Washington Post*, meanwhile, used surveys differently. It conducted its own survey of fifty traditionally Democratic, carefully selected voting precincts in the ten largest states, using eight of its reporters for the interviewing. Two of them spent more than a month at the task, the others spending from a couple of days to a week or more. After publishing eight magazine-length articles on the findings, the *Post* again hired Hart, this time to survey significant segments of the electorate. The *Post* and six other newspapers shared the costs and the data. Hart focused on voters over the age of fifty, on Catholics, on the "youth vote," and on voters earning over \$15,000 annually. Two articles on each segment were published.

"I'm not sure how different this [questioning of candidates] is from the way it was before the polls," he says. "Then, I would presume that, as the question of labor endorsements came out in 1936 and '40, there was probably an equal amount of 'What are you going to do now that the Teamsters have endorsed your opposition?' And so forth, which I simply see as generically the same sort of question, about how come you're not doing so well with this or that identifiable sector. Polling just makes it easier to specify a lot more groups that you're not doing well with."

Jack Rosenthal of the *Times*, who was detached from his normal Washington bureau duties for ten months to work on the Yankelovich projects, says that the jet plane and television have made polling imperative. In earlier days, he says, good "seat-of-the-pants" political reporters could cover a presidential campaign by traveling with the candidates by train, say, and getting a feel for how they were doing and how the electorate was responding. Such reporting is impossible now, since candidates gear their appeals to media markets.

No other way than surveying exists to gauge a campaign's effectiveness as it comes into living rooms, he says.

"To follow only what the candidate is saying doesn't tell you anything about how the country is responding to him, what he wants, how he comes over, how he articulates his themes, how he is

perceived . . .," declares Haynes Johnson of the *Post*, who worked with that newspaper's surveyor, Peter Hart. Johnson's colleague David Broder adds, "I think reporting on the standings in a presidential race or any race is an important component of political reporting. It is a contest, and like any other contest, people want to know who's ahead and who's behind. If you have ways of measuring that, that's legitimate information for the readers to have and that's legitimate news. . . ."

Broder says that the device he insists be called not polling, but voter interviewing, "was the most important thing to use this year, because there was an awful lot going on in the country that you could find out only by talking to voters and not simply by listening to politicians. I think a case can be made and demonstrated that the voter interviewing pieces that we did . . . gave the best clue and direction not only as to the outcome of the races, which was not our primary focus, but as to what the reasons for the choices were, what the message was."

Yet some readers feel that when they picked up a newspaper, all they saw were such polling stories. Johnson, for one, sympathizes.

"I think the country is saturated with surveys and weary of polls and angry about them," he

---

## " 'You have to avoid inadvertently creating news . . . ' "

---

says. "I think that people resent them, and I do, too. In a larger sense, this is like one of the problems in the country—that there is too much impersonality in our lives, which is a cliché, but which is nonetheless true; that government is big and distant, that everything is far off and it doesn't really quite touch you, and then you come out with these polls and surveys that will tell you exactly how you feel—I don't feel that way, They never talked to me."

One expert pollster-journalist who believed



polls were overdone in 1972 is Philip Meyer of the Knight chain. Knight did no pre-election polling after the primaries because, as Meyer says, "we didn't think it was that interesting." Further, says Meyer, "most of the interpretation I saw was belaboring the obvious: for example, the New York *Times* made a lead on the fact that so many Democrats voted for Nixon. Well, now, more people than normal in every category you can think of voted Republican than usual. That's how come he won by so much."

Meyer believes the newspapers that emphasized polling this year wasted their money. "If you figure that the function of a newspaper is to explore questions that people are interested in," he says, "I think they missed the boat. However, you could not be sure at the time that they set out to do these projects that it was going to be that kind of an election, so you really can't fault them."

The Los Angeles *Times*' editors felt that some papers were going overboard on the polls and strove to keep their readers from being overly bored with them. They published only one summarizing version of the eight articles available on the *Post*'s service from its reporter-conducted series, and their own polling was limited to surveys in Democratic precincts in Cleveland, Los Angeles, and San Francisco (a total of six stories) and to publication of the data compiled by Mervin Field for California.

Don Pickels, managing editor of the Houston *Chronicle*, says he tried to maintain a balance on polling and other campaign stories. The *Chronicle* used the eight articles from the Hart data, but has discontinued a nonscientific survey it formerly conducted in Texas on local races.

David Jones, national editor of the New York *Times*, believes the paper's involvement with surveying was nothing but beneficial; the *Times*' coverage was not adversely affected by cost in money or manpower of participating in the surveying, he maintains, and the intelligence helped the *Times* over-all. The poll data were fed to each of the *Times*' political reporters after each wave, and the reporters "sought, with sometimes greater or lesser success, to feed this in and use it in their stories, or use it in connection with their reporting, although they wouldn't necessarily mention

it in a story. . . . It would help their reporting."

Perhaps the larger question raised by the 1972 coverage is why survey research isn't used more extensively—for all kinds of stories, not just election campaigns.

The Des Moines *Register* with its Iowa Poll and the Minneapolis *Tribune* with its Minnesota Poll have been doing this for years, as have the ten daily Knight Newspapers and the Detroit *News*. But most newspapers do not do this. There are two main reasons: 1) newspapers, in particular, tend to distrust scientific tools; 2) survey research can be expensive. Yet in academia, Rosenthal points out, quantification—putting anything measurable by any means into numbers—is the rule.

"It's not that difficult," he says, "and it is necessary. The challenge here is not that the *Post* and the *Times* have demonstrated that you can get useful, sophisticated, interesting insights that go way beyond horse races, that go way beyond candidates and into the electorate. The larger question for other papers and ours is whether we can begin to adapt some of these tools to our whole report."

Dr. Warren E. Miller of the University of Michigan suggests that joint university-newspaper surveying is a wave of the future, and that papers must "do more to generate their own data, one way or another, in part because a lot of the questions that I think a good reporter will ask are not necessarily going to be asked by Gallup."

Was 1972's survey activity excessive? Dr. Miller, the dean of academic survey researchers, says no. In contrast to Mankiewicz's contention that about all McGovern was asked was how he felt about what poll data were showing, Dr. Miller believes the use of surveys was constructive.

But newspapers must understand the dangers of polling, he says; creating false expectations is one of them. "You have to avoid inadvertently creating news. One of the examples is the differential treatment of the New Hampshire primary. From someplace came the definition in 1968 that McCarthy would have to get something like 25 per cent in order to do well. And he gets 42 per cent and that's news. Well, the principal news was that the newsmen's expectations were way off.

"In 1972 Muskie was supposed to get 50, and

the fact that he didn't get 50 per cent became news. Well, it may have been that he was really exceedingly lucky to get the 47 per cent he got. One of the functions of newspapers is to create expectations, and if you end up inadvertently creating totally unreasonable expectations, when the unreasonableness then gets exposed it's treated as news rather than simply as a mistake of some time ago that has now been rectified."

Another, perhaps more dangerous pitfall lies in the questions asked. An example is the Yankelovich finding that voters in the New York area considered themselves more conservative than they once did. The questions asked did not really delve into what the interviewees meant by conservative, as did a similar survey by the Roper Organization for a private client. His respondents also showed an increasing self-characterization of conservatism, says Roper. "That paints a pretty conservative picture of the American public; but it also paints an erroneous picture."

Roper says most of the people who considered themselves conservative cited law and order as a key concern. So the questionnaire included "a list of things that might prevent future prison riots." The things ranged from "coddling the prisoners" to "getting tough" with them. "When we asked about having more and tougher guards," he says, "the public rejected it. When we asked about having greater use of solitary confinement, the public rejected it. When we asked about greater use of physical punishment for prisoners, the public rejected it. When we asked about better food and recreation, good idea. Better job training? Good idea. Conjugal visits with wives? Good idea.

"Now those are the same people that self-characterized themselves as conservatives, that say they are concerned about law and order, that want a more constructionist Supreme Court. They're concerned, things are changing too fast, and there is a feeling of wanting to have bedrock under them and they feel conservative—but they are highly receptive to innovative ideas."

The suggestion here is that the Yankelovich

questions—and the perhaps predictable answers—did not go deeply enough, and might, in a way, have played into the hands of the strategy of the Committee to Reelect the President—which was projecting an image of innovative Conservatism, with the President's wage-price controls, welfare reform bills, travels to Communist nations, and the like.

Ruth Clark, the Yankelovich vice president who coordinated the *Times-Time* work, insists that her questions were properly drawn and the answers properly interpreted. She says that she has never asked respondents to examine a list of possible changes in prisons and that "in a sense, you're asking people to become experts in how to improve prison conditions, so I would question something like that." She adds that all the answers—on busing, quotas, law and order—on that particular series of questions lined up appropriately with the conservative self-typification.

The point is that survey research of depth and value requires great attention to detail and anticipation of problems and nuances. For example, Roper points out, in surveying campus youth, it is more important to know what the respondents major in than to know what school they attend: students majoring in the humanities—sociology, for instance—would have been likely McGovern supporters this year, while business administration and engineering majors would likely have been Nixon supporters. If an interviewer walks onto a campus and starts randomly selecting, say, every sixth student at Point X, the surveyor could possibly end up where a particular group congregated.

If newspapers do undertake such surveying, suggests Rosenthal, they must assign a top news staff member to the project—not a newsroom hack. As he put it in his recommendation to the *Times'* management that it do far more such surveying, "You've got to be willing to invest not only the cost of a reputable guy but a guy who will ask the right questions and look for the right answers. You can't go out and buy a package—you've got to be intimately involved in it."

#### Notes from the Socialist Register

—UPI Capitol News Service Wire, Oct. 10.

WENPSTEAD, LAKE GROVE AND WESTBURY.

COX, WHOSE SOCIALIST FAMILY HAS A SUMMER HOME IN WESTHAMPTON, LONG ISLAND, WILL MEET WITH 500 CITIZENS AT GOLDEN HOUSING UNIT

For more than four years the FCC has been considering a proposed rule to require the breakup of local newspaper-TV combinations. The proposal's fate has been instructive.

## The FCC's nonbattle against media monopoly

STEPHEN R. BARNETT

■ Consolidation of ownership is one of the dominant facts of mass media operations in this country. Newspaper chains now control more than 60 per cent of the nation's daily newspaper circulation [see "The Rush to Chain Ownership," Nov./Dec.] and are fast acquiring the rest. At the local level, daily newspaper monopoly prevails almost everywhere. And there are some ninety-three instances in some eighty-five American cities where the owner of the daily paper also owns a local TV station.

The existing anti-trust laws, even assuming the Department of Justice enforced them against the media, would have a limited effect in deterring concentration. They do not apply to newspaper chains, since newspapers in different cities are not in competition with one another, and they do not reach newspaper monopolies, unless the monopoly is created or maintained by improper means. Their impact on newspaper-TV combinations has never been tested; it would probably have to be fought out, in any event, through lengthy trials on a city-by-city basis.

The Federal Communications Commission,

however, almost certainly does have authority to decline to license TV stations to the owners of daily papers in the same city. In fact, for more than four years the FCC has been considering a proposed rule to require the breakup of these combinations. This is the most significant attempt to deal with media concentration in this country since 1941-44, when the FCC similarly examined newspaper ownership of radio stations (and ultimately declined to adopt a rule prohibiting such ownership, promising instead to deal with the problem on a case-by-case basis—which it generally has not done). The handling of the newspaper-TV issue by the FCC deserves attention, and so does the treatment of the story by the news media.

In the thirty years since the FCC last made a broad-scale inquiry into newspaper-broadcast combinations, two developments have transformed the media landscape. The rise of TV and the near-total development of newspaper monopoly have made it clear that any concern over media concentration must focus on newspaper-TV combinations. FCC Chairman Dean Burch, concurring in the FCC rule-making proposal (but without indicating how he would eventually vote), has put the problem succinctly: "There are only a few daily newspapers in each large city and their

---

Stephen R. Barnett is a law professor at the University of California at Berkeley.

numbers are declining. There are only a few powerful VHF stations in these cities and their numbers cannot be increased. Equally important, the evidence shows that the very large majority of people get their news information from these two limited sources. Here then are the guts of the matter."

Concern over media concentration, and newspaper-TV combinations in particular, was not a bureaucratic figment of the FCC. Vice President Agnew, his political motivation notwithstanding, raised a real issue when he declared in November, 1969, "The American people should be made aware of the trend toward monopolization of the great public information vehicles and the concentration of more and more power over public opinion in fewer and fewer hands." He then went on to attack newspaper broadcast combinations in particular (albeit only those of the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*).

The President's Commission on Violence recommended in its 1969 report that "private and governmental institutions encourage the development of competing news media and discourage increased concentration of control over existing media." Hubert Humphrey—who, like Spiro Agnew, has since dropped the subject—wrote in a syndicated newspaper column in December, 1969, that "the really serious questions involving the media should be continually raised," and included among those questions, "Is there too much concentration of media ownership?" and "Should newspapers be prevented from owning broadcast stations in the same city?" Congress itself, in passing the Newspaper Preservation Act in 1970, espoused a policy designed to preserve separate ownership of the two newspapers in a city in order to provide "separate and independent voices"; that policy applies at least as strongly in favor of separate ownership of a newspaper and a TV station where there is no need to sacrifice economic competition through an anti-trust exemption.

The most potent expressions of concern have come from the Department of Justice and, in response, from the FCC. In August, 1968, the Department, in a filing with the FCC, pointed to "the existing concentration of media ownership in many . . . cities" and recommended that the

Commission do something about it, namely adopt a rule divorcing the ownership of daily newspapers and TV stations within the same city. The FCC entertained "comments" on the proposal for a prolonged period—four times extending the deadline at the request of the National Association of Broadcasters. Finally, in April, 1970, instead of making a decision, the Commission simply repeated the proposal, this time as its own, for more comments.

Specifically, the FCC proposed to adopt a rule requiring the owners of daily newspapers and TV stations in the same city—and also of daily newspapers and radio stations, of which there are some 230 instances—to sell either the station or the newspaper within five years. Citing a wide variety of surveys, the FCC declared: "In view of the primary position of the daily newspaper of general circulation and the television broadcast station as sources of news and other information, and discussion of public affairs, particularly with respect to local matters, it is not desirable that these two organs of mass communication should be under the same control in any community."

Far from being Draconian, the proposed rule would have a gentle, cushioned impact. By allowing divestiture in five years, it would "forfeit" no broadcast licenses. By banning only *local* combinations it would produce a trading process between combination owners in different cities. A special dispensation from the tax laws would waive the payment of capital-gains tax on sales or exchanges resulting from the rule. In addition, the rule would be subject to waiver in individual cases, specifically if it was shown that the newspaper or TV station as in the case of UHF could not survive without subsidies from its local cross-media affiliate. (Few if any of the affected newspapers, however, will need such subsidies; of the approximately ninety-three newspaper-TV combinations, some sixty-three involve the only daily newspaper publisher in town. In eight others, the TV licensee is one of two publishers who share a monopoly of the local newspaper market by virtue of a joint-operating agreement. In all the remaining cases except New York City—where the paper involved is the *Daily News*, which seems solvent—there are now only two competing pub-



lishers, each of which typically has the morning or evening market to himself, a situation in which the paper should be profitable if it even remotely deserves to be.)

Thus the rule would do little to bring new or independent owners into the mass media, but it would at least diversify the control of the dominant media outlets in each city. The result would be greater diversity and competition in local news coverage, in editorial points of view on local issues, in concepts of media service, and of course in the economic sphere. There would be a freer flow of news, commentary, and criticism on the many stories in which one of the local media outlets, or

---

## *"Legal badminton between the Commission and the courts . . ."*

---

its owner, was interested or involved. One can see advantages on both ends, for example, if the *Washington Post* were to swap its TV station in Washington for the one in Chicago owned by the *Chicago Tribune*, or for one of the newspaper-owned stations in Dallas or Houston.

After reiterating in April, 1970, the proposal made by the Justice Department in 1968, the FCC started all over again with another protracted process of receiving comments. This included four more extensions of time granted at the request of the NAB and the American Newspaper Publishers Assn. before the process finally came to an end in August, 1971. It is now more than a year since then, more than two and a half years since the FCC proposed the rule, and more than four years since the original proposal by the Justice Department. Yet the FCC still has not acted. And according to a report in *Television Digest* in mid-September, 1972, the Commission has put the newspaper-broadcast proposal "on the back burner."

The reasons for the delay are not hard to find. The FCC's proposal has been the target of all-out opposition by the newspaper and broadcast

industries. The NAB alone has raised and spent more than \$300,000 in the fight. It has hired Lee Loevinger, who resigned as an FCC commissioner in 1968 to represent broadcast interests, as special counsel to present its case to the FCC. "Studies" opposing the rule have been commissioned from the academic world and elsewhere, and scores of opposing comments prepared by Washington lawyers have descended on the FCC. (ANPA told the Commission that opposing comments have come from "more than 150 responsible and informed publishers, broadcasters, press associations, and other spokesmen for the nation's newspapers and broadcast stations" while the proposed rules "have been supported so far by a total of only five pleadings.") Meanwhile, the industries have lobbied extensively to arouse opposition to the proposal from Congress and the White House. And through it all the nation's news media, with only the barest exceptions, have somehow overlooked the story.

Under cover of the media blackout, the industry's lobbying campaign has paid off handsomely at the White House. The Administration's two chief spokesmen on media matters, communications director Herbert Klein and Clay T. Whitehead, director of the Office of Telecommunications Policy, have made the circuit of broadcasters' and publishers' conventions expressing White House opposition to the FCC's proposal. At an NAB convention in 1970, for example, Klein praised "newspaper ownership of stations." Whitehead told the ANPA convention last April that adoption of the proposal "would be a great mistake," adding: "We are much more concerned about performance than who gets to own what." President Nixon himself may have conveyed the same message during the private meeting he held with thirty broadcast executives at the White House on June 22. (In supporting the industry's position, the White House repudiates the public stance of its own Justice Department, which has continued to urge the FCC to adopt the proposed rule.)

The net result of all this has been to keep the issue of local media concentration in suspension—to preserve the status quo—by a game of legal badminton between the Commission and the courts. With the unique exception of the case of WHDH

in Boston [see "Did Boston's *Herald Traveler* Have to Die?" July/Aug.], the Commission and the courts have taken the position on challenges to renewal of broadcast licenses held by local daily newspapers that the issue of "undue concentration" should not be considered on a case-by-case basis since nonrenewal would mean "forfeiture of the license." Instead, they have said, concentration should be considered in the context of an across-the-board rule such as the FCC has proposed, since that would allow for sale or exchange of the licenses involved (or of the newspapers).

In February, 1970, for example, the Federal Court of Appeals in Washington upheld the FCC's renewal of one of the broadcast licenses held by the media empire of the Mormon Church in Salt Lake City, but only because the FCC in the rule-making proceeding "is seriously engaged in a sweeping policy review" of local media concentration. Judge Edward Tamm, concurring in the decision, pointed to the "disheartening statistics describing the marked trend toward concentration of media ownership," warned that "the risk inherent in allowing these accretions of power to persist unchecked is clear," and emphasized that he was voting to sustain the renewal "solely because" of the "single, crucial fact" that the FCC was considering the issue in rule-making proceedings—proceedings which he thought "offer some hope that the Commission will finally come to grips with the grave problems inherent in the rising concentration of ownership in the mass media. . . ."

Last June—more than two years later—another panel of the same court similarly upheld the FCC's action in renewing, without a hearing on the concentration issue, the TV license held by the *Evening Star* in Washington. Again the court relied on the fact that "the FCC is currently investigating—in the context of the rule-making proceeding—whether it should adopt rules which would require divestiture by newspapers or other multiple owners in a given market." But the FCC, after more than four years, continues to stall the proceeding.

The objective of those who oppose the rule, both within and outside the Commission, is ap-

parently to keep the proceeding on ice at least until next summer. By then the FCC will have lost Commissioner Nicholas Johnson, who strongly favors the rule (his term ends in June).

Meanwhile, opponents of the proposed rule urge the FCC to reject it primarily on the ground that the subject should be handled by a case-by-case approach. Until recently, this was easy because that approach had never been tried. The approach may now be examined, however, in light of one application of it. This is the case of KRON-TV, the San Francisco TV station owned by the Chronicle Publishing Co., publisher of the city's only morning newspaper (and partner, since 1965, in a joint-operating agreement with the city's only evening newspaper, the Hearst-owned *Examiner*). The case involves charges of distortion of news on the TV station to promote the owner's newspaper interests; of distortion of the newspaper's contents to promote the owner's TV interests; and of distortion of TV news to promote the owner's interest in obtaining cable-TV franchises in the San Francisco area.

Ordinarily, allegations that a broadcast licensee

---

## "To extend the license regardless of challenges . . ."

---

has engaged in self-interested news distortion will not be given a hearing by the FCC. This is not because the Commission condones such conduct; on the contrary, it has declared that "slanting of the news amounts to a fraud upon the public and is patently inconsistent with the licensee's obligation to operate his facilities in the public interest." The reason lies, rather, in the FCC's declaration that it will "eschew a censor's role, including efforts to establish news distortion in situations where Government intervention would constitute a worse danger than the possible rigging itself." The FCC therefore will not inquire into alleged news distortion unless presented with a

special sort of evidence. Nor will it hold up renewal of a broadcast license on this ground unless there is "substantial extrinsic evidence of motives inconsistent with the public interest," and "unless the extrinsic evidence of possible deliberate distortion or staging of the news which is brought to our attention involves the licensee, including its principals, top management, or news management."

To illustrate the kind of "substantial extrinsic evidence" that would meet this test, the FCC has regularly offered one example: "testimony of a station employee concerning his instructions from management," or documentary evidence of such instructions—"For example, if it is asserted by a newsman that he was directed by the licensee to slant the news, that would raise serious questions as to the character qualifications of the licensee. . . ." Not many newsmen will be willing to blow the whistle on their employers by presenting the FCC with the required evidence of news-distortion directives from the station's management, an act that must be done publicly and is very likely to ruin the career of the newsman who does it.

The KRON case is uniquely significant because that is what happened. Albert Kihn, a news cameraman who worked for KRON for eight years, became disenchanted with events in the newsroom, kept a diary and collected evidence, and in the fall of 1968, when the station's license was up for renewal, told his story to the FCC. (Kihn has not since been regularly employed in broadcast journalism.) On the basis of Kihn's allegations, the FCC held up renewal of the license and ordered a hearing to determine whether "the licensee has attempted to slant news and public affairs programs to serve its business interests."

The hearing was held in San Francisco for thirty-seven days in 1970. On March 1, 1971, the FCC's hearing examiner, Chester F. Naumowicz, Jr., resolved all the issues in favor of the KRON management and recommended renewal of the license. The FCC must review this recommendation and make the final decision (subject to court appeal), but as yet has not done so. Meanwhile, KRON continues to operate on the license issued in 1965 and not renewed in 1968.

The facts in the KRON case, as determined by

the hearing examiner, have a good deal of relevance to the FCC's proposed rule on newspaper-broadcast combinations. Notwithstanding his conclusion in favor of the station owner, the examiner's report demonstrates two things: 1) common ownership of more than one media outlet in the same city, and of a daily newspaper and TV station in particular, does have harmful effects; and 2) the case-by-case approach is ill-suited to dealing with them.

The hearing examiner, even while exonerating the KRON management of any "abuse" resulting from common ownership of the newspaper and TV station, determined that the public had been harmed in one important instance. This occurred in September, 1965, when the *Chronicle* and Hearst were about to put into effect the joint-operating agreement between their San Francisco newspapers. The agreement, signed in October, 1964, but kept secret, provided not only for joint publication of the *Chronicle* in the morning and Hearst's *Examiner* in the afternoon (with a 50-50 split of all profits from either paper), but also for elimination of what was then San Francisco's third daily, the *News-Call Bulletin*, also published by Hearst.

As the hearing examiner found, the story of the upcoming "merger" began to break in the week before the eventual announcement by the two publishers on Sept. 10, 1965. During this period two San Francisco TV stations and various radio stations covered the story, reporting "such things as meetings of unions which might be affected, and alterations on the physical plants of the newspapers involved." But there was no coverage in any of San Francisco's three newspapers prior to the Sept. 10 announcement, except that on Sept. 5 "the *Chronicle* published a reference to it based on a story from the New York *Times* wire service." Meanwhile, "no mention of the matter was made on KRON-TV" before the publishers' announcement.

The examiner found, as indeed was admitted, that KRON's lack of coverage resulted from orders by the station's chief executive. He found that when the story began to break on the other stations, KRON newsmen had "importuned their superiors for permission to cover the story," but were denied such permission. The station's chief

executive, although a vice president of Chronicle Publishing Co., was unaware of the joint-operating agreement and telephoned the publisher of the *Chronicle* "to ascertain the validity of the rumors." But the publisher "refused to comment," whereupon the station chief "issued the instructions which blocked the KRON newsmen from broadcasting the story until the newspapers issued a statement on the matter."

The examiner concluded this was a "reasonable reaction to a unique and delicate situation, rather than an attempt to suppress news"; while "obviously a local newspaper merger was highly newsworthy," any coverage by KRON "would be publicly regarded as based on 'inside' information," and since the station actually had no inside information, the public would have been misled. It

---

## "Four more extensions of time . . ."

---

was a situation "where neither course was free of hazards," and therefore "a decision to say nothing was not unreasonable."

Accepting this, it follows that the newspaper-broadcast tie was harmful to the public's interest in the news. Whichever course the station took, the public would suffer—either through not hearing of a "highly newsworthy" story, or through being misled into thinking it was getting inside information when it was not. Such a situation, moreover, was not in fact unique to the 1965 merger in San Francisco. While that story was especially newsworthy, a similar problem arises whenever a broadcast station is confronted with a potential news story involving a commonly owned newspaper, or vice versa—occasions by no means rare in these days of heightened public awareness of the mass media and frequent controversies involving them. It is inherent in common ownership of more than one significant media outlet in a city.

Another incident involved the municipality of South San Francisco at a time when the *Chronicle* was competing for the CATV franchise there. KRON newsmen were told, in a memo from the news director dated Dec. 20, 1966:

Between now and the first of February, let us concentrate a little heavier on SOUTH San Francisco—if warranted. HPS would like to make those people happy. . . . ["HPS" was Harold P. See, president of KRON-TV and also of the *Chronicle*-owned cable-TV company.]

A second memo from the news director, dated Feb. 6, 1967, ordered coverage of a library dedication in South San Francisco and added:

HPS wants to make sure that the mayor of South SF is prominent in any film we do!

KRON covered the dedication, but most of the film it took was ruined by the laboratory—a fact that led See to write a letter of explanation to the mayor of South San Francisco. See admitted the letter "was motivated by CATV considerations," but denied that "the dedication coverage was related to a CATV interest."

Weighing this evidence, the examiner found that it demonstrated "an unusual interest in a political figure" on See's part, but did not prove that his motives in ordering the coverage arose from the CATV interest. See denied such a motive, and there was "no direct evidence in contradiction" the examiner said. "While such an intention might be inferred from . . . [the] Feb. 6 memo, the inference could only be based on a conjectural choice of possible motives for See's interest in South San Francisco. If KRON is to be convicted on circumstantial evidence, the circumstances should be considerably less ambiguous."

As this incident and a number of others indicate, necessary proof of improper motive in questions of abuse of media power is very difficult to come by. Even after the initial hurdle is surmounted by employee testimony of questionable news orders from management the case turns on the subjective motive for those orders. The executive who gave the orders will deny that his motive was improper, and proving him a liar may well be impossible—even assuming the FCC may be conducting such an inquiry in the first place.



Still another example involved alleged distortion of *Chronicle* editorial material to promote the owner's interest in the TV station. The FCC, in its hearing order, had cited an allegation that a *Chronicle* column by Charles McCabe "had been censored because the article urged 'citizens to contact the FCC about violence on television'." At the hearing, McCabe testified that in his ten years of writing a daily column for the *Chronicle*, "perhaps a total of less than 100 words has ever been censored from the content of my column, with one exception": a column on TV violence, written upon the death of Robert Kennedy, which urged readers to complain to the FCC and which the newspaper had "killed outright." McCabe's entire testimony was stricken from the record by the hearing examiner—notwithstanding inclusion of the item in the FCC's hearing order—on the ground that inquiry into what a newspaper prints would be inconsistent with the First Amendment.

If this ruling was correct, it may be asked how the FCC, using the case-by-case approach, can ever protect the public against the various possible abuses of newspaper-broadcast cross-ownership that may affect the content of the newspaper. The FCC has not hesitated to denounce in principle the slanting of content to promote an owner's ancillary interests, and has considered newspaper content in a number of such cases. For instance, it

---

### "What we have, then, is a shell game . . ."

---

has frequently considered (but never found proven) charges that a newspaper discriminates in favor of its own broadcast stations in TV and radio listings and related material.

Yet in refusing to hear such testimony, the examiner had a point. Even though a newspaper's right to publish does not include the right to hold a broadcast license, and even though the FCC correctly insists that distortion by a newspaper to

promote the interests of the station would be improper action by the licensee, and even though the FCC will nonetheless refuse to hold a hearing except in the rare case presenting "extrinsic evidence" of such an abuse, a governmental inquiry into a newspaper's motive for what it prints or fails to print must cause discomfort. Whether or not it would be unconstitutional, such an inquiry should not be undertaken unless there is no alternative way of protecting the public's interest in an undistorted flow of news (an interest sharpened, of course, by the absence of competing newspapers in the city).

The objection to such a proceeding is not limited, however, to issues involving the content of the newspaper. If it is undesirable for the FCC to probe the news decisions and underlying motives of a newspaper, it is no less undesirable in principle for it to be doing the same thing with respect to a broadcast station. Yet that is what the KRON hearing mainly consisted of. Whatever one thinks of the facts of the KRON case or of the hearing examiner's decision, this kind of inquiry into alleged abuses of media ownership is at best awkward and very possibly unconstitutional. Yet this is the case-by-case approach so strongly touted by opponents of the FCC's proposed rule. Under it, hearings of this kind are the only protection the public has against the most flagrant abuses of power by the owners of dominant media outlets in cities throughout the country.

What we have, then, is a shell game. Outraged by the WHDH case, where the FCC lifted a TV license from a newspaper through a case-by-case approach to media concentration, broadcasters and publishers have persuaded the FCC to renounce the case-by-case approach in favor of rule-making. Accordingly, the Commission and the Court of Appeals have refused, in view of the pending rule-making proceedings, to consider the concentration issue when licenses come up for renewal—and this has now gone on for more than four years, with no rule-making decision yet in sight.

One may wonder whether the Court of Appeals, which has tolerated the FCC's inaction in renewal cases out of deference to the rule-making proposal, will continue to do so indefinitely. But the

industry has a solution to this danger, too. It is pushing for Congressional passage of a license-renewal bill—for which NAB already claims the support of forty-nine Senators and 256 Congressmen—that would extend the license period from three to five years and require renewal, regardless of any challenges or competing applications, as long as the incumbent licensee has made a “good faith effort” to serve the public. The bill would prevent the FCC from considering media concentration in such circumstances and would thus knock out permanently the case-by-case approach. It would leave a compliant FCC free to abandon

the rule-making proceeding and walk away from the problem of local media concentration.

While waiting for the bill to pass, the industry can comfortably support keeping the rule-making proceeding alive to preserve its shield against case-by-case action, and the FCC can be expected to accommodate this desire. And the odds are that the bill will pass. Few lobbies are more powerful than broadcasters and publishers united. And there are *no* other lobbies that can back up their efforts to get what they want in Washington with an information blackout in the nation's newspapers and TV media.

### **Dreamy eyes department**

—St. Louis  
*Post-Dispatch*,  
Oct. 1.



**YES, COACH?** Did you want to talk to li'l ol' me? Janice Magee, the only woman certified to officiate Michigan high school football games, could melt even the most cold-blooded coach's heart with these dreamy eyes. (UPI Telephoto)

## China: casting off the myths

NORMAN E. ISAACS

"The new challenge to our professionalism may well be Mao's China. The door is ajar. Let us go in as the communicators we claim to be."

■ Last February, I was among the millions of Americans who sat before television watching the scenes of President Nixon in Peking's Great Hall of the People, in the Forbidden City, and at the Great Wall. There was wistful envy in my watching because for more than ten years I had been among those applying for entry into China. The envy was soon to vanish, for in late September, I finally got there when China opened the door to twenty members of the American Society of Newspaper Editors for a twenty-four-day, 4,000-mile journey.

While thrilling, it was also a sobering experience. China is the third largest nation on earth—3.75 million miles in area—containing a fourth of the globe's people: at least 800 million. The problem of journalistic coverage of this vast mountainous land seems almost insurmountable. Yet meaningful coverage must be attempted if our two nations are to live without alarms and suspicions.

---

Norman E. Isaacs, former Louisville *Courier-Journal* and *Times* editor and a past president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, is editor-in-residence at Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism. He visited China with a delegation from ASNE last fall.

Aside from the few distinguished writers and historians like Barbara Tuchman and the late Edgar Snow and the journalists who accompanied Mr. Nixon, no more than a dozen American newspaper people had been in Mao Tse-tung's China until we arrived. That small group included William Attwood of *Newsday*, Seymour Topping of the *New York Times*, and Robert Keatley of the *Wall Street Journal*, who went in together last year; Joseph Kraft for the *New Yorker*; and more recently, executives of Associated Press and United Press International who went to establish news-exchange agreements with Hsinhua, the official Chinese news agency.

A tiny group of Western correspondents resides in Peking, and some of their reports appear in American dailies. But it is the wire service agreements and the possibility of resident U.S. correspondents there that have raised many hopes of more solid coverage from inside China. How valid are these hopes?

The West takes certain news coverage patterns for granted. But none of these accepted patterns applies to China. This was driven home with great clarity the day our caravan of Shanghai-built automobiles was traveling along one of

North China's tree-lined roads, heading for a farm commune. We were averaging about thirty miles an hour, the maximum a good Chinese chauffeur can maintain, given the number of pedestrians of all ages, hand- and burro-pulled carts, drays, and wagons he has to avoid, as well as the innumerable bicycles, three-wheeled pedicycles, jeeps, trucks, and occasional buses. Every now and then, Arthur Deck, executive editor of the Salt Lake City *Tribune*, would motion silently toward a new scene. In the car with us, in addition to our interpreter-guide, was the chief of the Shensi provincial staff of Hsinhua (which means New China).

Up to this point we had met only with top-level editors and managers. Here was a reporter—one who directed coverage for an area larger than the six New England states, with a population rivaling California's. Through our interpreter we

---

## *"No accepted patterns apply to China . . ."*

---

were trying to gauge his criteria for news judgments; of what gets covered and what doesn't. We had started with the inquiry about what kind of accidents and crimes get reported.

None, he said firmly, shaking his head; this "is not useful news." Would a big flood be covered, perhaps? Yes. "We would report any big natural disturbance. The Government would want to know the extent of the damage." Try another way. What is "useful" news? "A useful story," he said, "is about the building of a new factory, or some new industrial development, or a big irrigation project. We visit farm communes and report on production—on how the commune is meeting its quotas, how the lessons of Tachai are being applied." (Tachai is a production brigade in the mountains of Shansi, constantly lauded for its self-reliance and hard work and for putting "proletarian politics in command"; it is held up

throughout China as the model for all who toil in the fields.) No matter. However we phrased the questions, the answers made it clear that there is only a faint relationship between news coverage in the United States and that in China.

At one point I posed a hypothetical situation that subsequently led to our first open brush with a hard-line Party member, which is what Hsinhua's correspondent is. I made the case that our press considers itself the watchdog in matters of governmental honesty and ethics. "Suppose," I said, "that you got reports some cadre (the Chinese word for leader) in a big government post had put his wife and other relatives in important jobs, that they were selecting the best housing for themselves, perhaps even using government cars for their own use. Would this be a news story?" After some sparring, he said it would be reported, but it wasn't clear whether he meant as a story.

Deck moved in to try to sort it out. It took a number of questions before it became clear. Only slightly paraphrased, it went: "A thing like this would be something the central government would want to know. I would have it investigated and send the report to Peking. The chief editors there would know what to do with it." Art sighed, turned to me, and said, "He's a government agent." I agreed. But then they all are, one way or another. There is no effort to disguise it.

In Peking we had asked about Hsinhua's budget and were told, "We are a government agency and do not make public our budget." Both Hsinhua's top editors and those of newspapers across the country are members of China's Communist Party, serve on the various central committees, and know the line. Some editors were adjudged to have strayed from Mao Tse-tung's teachings in the days prior to the Cultural Revolution and have had to restudy their positions while working on farms, doing manual labor and learning to "understand the masses." As often as not, the labor includes shoveling manure and some have done it for as long as two years.

Not only editors, but university presidents and professors, factory managers, and thousands of bureaucrats have had to go through this demeaning disciplinary lesson. Chairman Mao's euphemistic term for this farm labor was "May 7th



Schools" and Hsinhua has its own. Some 110 staff members are presently on this farm in Shensi province for what we were told is a "rotation for each person every six months." *People's Daily*, the Party's voice, also has its own May 7th School and 200 "editors" are there now, we were told.

The day after our long ride to the commune, three of us gathered in the office of the *Shensi Daily* in Sian. It was the best journalistic session we had during our twenty-four days in China. The editor, Li Tioa, is an able, gentle, candid man. The three Americans were ASNE President J. Edward Murray of the Knight Newspapers, John Hughes, *Christian Science Monitor* editor, and me. The chief Hsinhua correspondent also was there, sitting next to Mr. Li, who was described as "the leading member" and "deputy chairman of the revolutionary committee" of the paper, a daily and Sunday enterprise with 600,000 circulation.

Of the paper's 420 employees, 150 are editorial staff members. Like all Chinese publications, it has no circulation department; the Post Office is the distributor and even collects. Its type, like that of all of China's papers, is hand-set because a minimum of 2,000 of the Chinese alphabet's 6,000 characters are needed for its daily report.

Page 1 concentrates on what Mr. Li called "important news," pages 2 and 3 on "economic and cultural affairs," and page 4 on international news, provided by Hsinhua's wires. It subsequently developed that pages 2 and 3 ran heavily to letters from readers. He stressed that "two-thirds of our content is local." I asked whether there had been anything printed about our visit. "You are not local news," said Mr. Li, smiling. "You are visitors under the Foreign Ministry and therefore international news. If he (he motioned to Hsinhua's correspondent) sent the information to Peking and Hsinhua carried it on the wire, we would then consider whether to publish it." We grinned back.

"What was your page 1 story today, the main one?"

"A report on activities in the rural areas—on learning from Tachai."

"How do you view the newspaper role?"

"A provincial newspaper's main task," said Mr. Li, "is to do propaganda work among the masses.

Apart from what Hsinhua provides on its wires, the news should reflect the provincial situation."

At *People's Daily* in Peking, John Hughes had raised the question of why provincial newspapers were not allowed into the hands of foreigners. There was some dodging, but we got the impression that it was because of the frankness of some of the local coverage. Here in Sian, John raised it anew. "These are matters that should be decided by the central government," said Mr. Li. "It is not for us to give reasons for these decisions." Half an hour later in the print shop, John picked up a copy of the paper, and Mr. Li, with a quip, took it out of his hands. As our discussion broadened, it seemed to us that the original assumption was probably correct: that one of the major roles of China's newspapers is to serve as safety valve for the citizens. All papers, like those of the Soviet Union, have what they call "mass work" departments, their terminology for letters. Here is where much editorial staff work is spent, investigating reader reports and complaints.

"One good example," said Mr. Li, "recently had to do with a letter about a barefoot doctor (a member of China's outstanding paramedic service) who cured many people with an unusual



People's Daily—"Mao made it clear the role is propaganda. . . ."

treatment. This letter we sent to the Health Office for study. One worker wrote, critical of a tailoring factory for not providing adequate education. This we published after investigating. Another worker wrote about bad service at a store. The Commercial Bureau checked up and the work improved quickly. We had a letter from a commune worker, critical of cadres for not taking part in manual labor. After checking this, we published the letter." But what about the commune worker who wrote? Did this leave him open to reprisal? Mr. Li shook his head. "Oh, no. When we are requested to do so, we protect the identity of letter writers."

The fifty-year-old Mr. Li has been with the paper twenty-six years, ever since its start in Yanan as a weekly tabloid, and he takes pride in his Party membership. "For a very brief period after the Cultural Revolution I stood aside," he said. No, he did not go to a May 7th School. "I spent the time studying. I read again the works of Chairman Mao, and Marx and Lenin, and the editorials in the newspaper." Ed Murray wanted to know if Mr. Li ever read anything critical of China, or of Communism. "Certainly," said Mr. Li amiably. "I get the *Information Digest*. By reading the two sides I understand why Chairman Mao is correct."

The *Information Digest* had us all intrigued. When first told that 6 million copies were distributed daily, we were skeptical. One of the leading foreign diplomats in Peking said all the embassies knew about the paper, but to the best of his knowledge no foreign diplomat had ever seen a copy. Editors in Peking told us it contained reports similar to what we saw in the daily *Hsin-hua Digest*, a mimeographed report akin to the USIS digests printed by American diplomatic posts around the world, except that the *Information Digest* was described as being "more complete in detail." No matter where we went, leading people in government, industry, and journalism all said matter of factly that they received the *Digest* and read it faithfully. Almost all seemed surprised by our interest; they did not, apparently, understand our astonishment about a publication with a daily run of 6 million whose dissemination could be so rigidly controlled.

Many American newsmen seem confused by

mention of the "Cultural Revolution" or the May 7th Schools. They must realize that one of the chief journalistic difficulties in trying to portray what is happening in China is lack of understanding of the Revolution—the most underreported major internal upheaval of our times. The paucity of information was not because of journalistic neglect or lack of effort; with the borders sealed, it wasn't possible to cover such a massive, complex event. Pieces were assembled with skill from places like Hong Kong, but it was, of necessity, a fragmented story that emerged.

John Hughes of the *Monitor* was one of the most fascinated students during our ASNE tour. During the Revolution, Hughes was one of the "China Watchers" in Hong Kong, and he now says candidly that he had not understood clearly the full scope of the outburst. In brief, with unavoidable oversimplification, this is what the furor was about:

Mao Tse-tung, now seventy-nine, has been a revolutionary since youth, when he fled a peasant home. Incensed by the excesses of China's landlord class and the arrogance of the intellectual elite and the bureaucrats, he became Asia's leading radical populist-Marxist, preaching reliance on the masses. With 80 per cent of China's population tilling the land, one can accept the pragmatic view that too-rapid mechanization might quickly create perhaps 100 million jobless. It needs to be remembered, too, that Mao helped build the remarkable PLA (People's Liberation Army), teaching it political theory and drilling the soldiers not only in guerrilla warfare but in paying and working their way through the countryside. The end result is an army commanding national respect and admiration.

After driving Chiang Kai-shek's government out of the country in 1948, Mao chose his key administrators from among old comrades. Chou En-lai is one. For his second in command, Mao picked Liu Shao-ch'i, now pictured throughout China as "renegade, hidden traitor, scab, and swindler." My impression is that the Cultural Revolution resulted from an honest disagreement between the two men. Liu apparently came to feel China desperately needed modernizing; there isn't much question that more than a few in Liu's

bureaucracy were contemptuous of what they called "utopian agrarian socialism." It may well be that the 1959 "Great Leap Forward," in which Mao induced so many peasants to try to puddle steel in their backyards, was his populist counter-thrust against Liu's arguments. One can't create an advanced society this way, of course, and the Leap was a monstrous failure. It led top bureaucrats to openly ridicule the old leader, through allegory and in a stage play.

Commanding figures like Mao are not only great propagandists; they are ruthless, patient plotters. For a long period Mao was out of sight, reported ill. Actually, he was making secret trips with his wife, laying the groundwork with old Communist Party comrades for the Red Guard uprising to come. When they were ready, Mao

---

### *"Toss away the banal and cliché- ridden stories . . ."*

---

reappeared with literally a major splash—his celebrated swim in the Yangtze River. Mao was telling China he was fit and ready. Immediately, there followed the big-character posters, BOMBARD THE HEADQUARTERS! Headquarters was the bureaucracy, his old enemy.

Imagine 11 million young radicals storming into Peking—a city of 7 million—breaking into the National Museum and wrecking it so thoroughly it is still not open; invading homes of the elderly and destroying their treasured possessions, while many of the old committed suicide in despair; barricading Chou En-lai in the Great Hall of the People, even though he was not personally a target; fighting government representatives ferociously with iron bars and arms looted from arsenals. In 1970, Chou told Edgar Snow that the army had suffered "hundreds of thousands of casualties" before it was given the signal to restore order. An army suffering casualties of this scope in a youth uprising is astonishing in itself.

No one knows the extent of Red Guard casualties once the army was loosed; we may never know.

Before this bloody suppression of the rebellion, however, Liu had been deposed, stripped of Party credentials, made a nonperson, vilified. Yet there are indications he stepped out honorably, saying he had tried to do his best for Mao and the country. His bureaucracy was purged. Anyone even faintly suspected of having leaned toward Liu was ordered to the May 7th Schools. We have no idea whether Liu is alive and, if so, where he is. Questions about him were simply never heard.

The revolution was a searing experience. Many Chinese with whom we talked tried to evade the subject, most saying the reports were exaggerated. Yet the facts are that the bureaucracy was reduced drastically, all of the country's high schools and universities were closed for four years, and many of the best intellectuals (prize resources in an underdeveloped country) have squandered valuable time in menial toil, doing penance for supposedly having tried to think independently. It seems to have been an *anti*-cultural revolution: for all the Red Guard clamor against "the four olds" (ideology, thought, customs, habits), it bore all the marks of a Maoist uprising against the new.

Seeing the results of Mao's incessant drive for cleanliness, honesty, industry, and a higher morality; seeing what he has produced in the stability and security for the average Chinese worker and peasant, it is not hard to understand why Maoism has become a near-religion. In his almost four hours with us, Chou said China intended to move into modernization "on its own two legs." This is Maoist economic theory. Given the lead-time for any kind of technology it is clear that China, for the time being, will continue to fall behind the advanced nations.

It obviously is awkward for Chinese editors to talk about the Cultural Revolution with prying American journalists. Yet they did, in front of their staff people, showing no outward sign of embarrassment, giving courteous responses to the most probing of personal questions. They defended the May 7th Schools and said repeatedly that we failed to understand the purpose. "Working with them gives us a better understanding of the feelings of laboring people," said Lu Ying,



chief of news operations at *People's Daily*. "We come to know better what they want in the way of service."

In almost every journalistic session, reference was made to Mao's talk to the editorial staff of the *Shansi-Suiyan Daily* in 1948, and we finally obtained copies. Mao made it clear then that the role of China's newspapers was propaganda. "To teach the masses," he told the staff, "newspaper workers should first learn from the masses. You comrades are all intellectuals. Intellectuals are often ignorant and often have little or no experience in practical matters. . . . To change from a lack of understanding to understanding, one must do things and see things; that is learning. Comrades working on the newspapers should go out by turns to take part in mass work, in land reform work for a time; that is very necessary."

If what I have been describing is China's coverage of itself, what do we get from the little group of Westerners in Peking—those representing Reuters, Agence France Presse, the West German and Italian news services, and the *Toronto Globe & Mail*? We get some color, some few insights into changes taking place, very little hard news. James Pringle, the Reuters bureau chief, phrased it well in saying that the incoming resident correspondent "finds it very hard to find the story at all." He reports that there are no government press conferences and few official statements.

"A correspondent here," says Pringle, "lives among foreigners in a virtual cocoon and has no social contact with the Chinese except for press department officials, usually at official functions. But he can straphang on a trolleybus, listen to what the man in the street is talking about, and scour bookshops. He can talk with foreign diplomats, several of whom are noted China scholars, call on exiled Cambodian chief Norodom Sihanouk. But correspondents are usually invited several times a week to state banquets at the Great Hall of the People and for arrival and departure ceremonies at the airport. Often these affairs seem quite pedestrian, but a correspondent is allowed to get within a few feet of top Chinese officials. For example, I was once able to get in a question to Prime Minister Chou as he walked from table to table at an Iranian reception."

Clearly, one requirement when American correspondents do move in eventually is that they speak Chinese. Otherwise, they will live in even more of a cocoon than Pringle has described. As is true elsewhere, Western correspondents are permitted no mobility; they are confined to Peking. Our ASNE group made "pitches" to Premier Chou and Deputy Foreign Minister Chang Wen-chin, appealing for freedom of movement for all foreign correspondents. We emphasized that we were a privileged few and that China's best interests were not being served by the restrictions. Chou and Chang listened politely, but I doubt they intend to do anything about it. We were there only because the Chinese Government is running a major international propaganda drive on two fronts: 1) enlisting what support and/or sympathy it can muster in its maneuvers against the Soviet Union; 2) trying to sway American "opinion-makers" to support China's campaign to regain sovereignty over Taiwan.

On this latter issue, Chou En-lai is at his pragmatic best. "We recognize that the United States has its problems," he told us. "But we are a patient people." There was mention also of Chiang Ching-kuo, who is now governing Taiwan. For me, at least, the signal seemed clear. The People's Republic wants to negotiate a settlement with the younger Chiang; it hopes the U.S. press will use its influence to lay the groundwork so that the White House will exert pressure on Taiwan's leaders. When the U.S. finds a way to say yes to Peking on this score, formal recognition will be instantaneous. Only then will U.S. correspondents be allowed to become residents in this vast land.

Meanwhile, Americans must learn to live with snatches of information about China for some time. The journalists who are allowed in will have many of the same opportunities our ASNE group did and they will come out with a deeper understanding of this new society. Many medical men will be coming and going because China is eager to show off its remarkable medical delivery system and anxious to establish groundwork for joint studies with American doctors. Scientists will be visiting—particularly, I suspect, those with credentials in water and pollution control. Businessmen will continue to be invited to the Canton



Trade Fair, where the Chinese hope to do an increasing business, and they will be given increasingly wider opportunities to visit elsewhere. One American journalistic task should be to watch closely these comings and goings and be alert to interview American professionals on their return.

In the light of Hsinhua's concept of coverage, some newsmen may question whether Associated Press and United Press International have gained anything from their news-sharing agreements. My answer has to be yes, all of us have gained; perhaps only minimally over the short range, but it is vital that we build for the long range. AP and UPI would have been tragically shortsighted had they failed to establish a beachhead in Peking. They obviously face a long and delicate negotiation to convince China's leaders to accept Americans in staff bureaus there, and it may be a long time before correspondents have free movement.

The real question is when will the information flow from China improve? Part of the answer depends, of course, on China's leaders and their sense of security. But part also will depend on the enterprise and intelligence of American newspaper and broadcast executives. They will have to send correspondents who know the Chinese language and who have studied Asian affairs sufficiently to understand the sensitivity and pride inherent in the Chinese character. American reporters and editors will have to learn to toss away the banal and cliché-ridden stories and to put their efforts into explaining the substance of China, of what it is attempting to do, and how it is succeeding or failing. If newsmen persist in

clinging to the archaic "today" and "yesterday" judgments about news we shall learn nothing—as the story of the Cultural Revolution demonstrates.

Too much foreign reporting over the years has been of the headline-hunting variety. Many of us shudder over the fact that in countries open and free American newsmen still gravitate toward the chancelleries and the parliaments, focusing on the pettifoggery of governmental manipulation and forgetting that the real story is the people. China, of all countries, doesn't lend itself to this kind of coverage. It is a land of endless contradictions. It is a have-not country, making do with turn-of-the-century equipment. Its living standards are woe-fully low. Yet there is a grace in its people that we are far from achieving.

The citizens of the United States might not have so many warped and curious ideas about foreign lands if we in journalism had dug deeper for perspective and worried less about competitive deadlines. The new challenge to our professionalism may well be Mao's China. The door is ajar.

There has long been a chasm between our promise and our delivery. But if we are to have a peaceful future it is vital that we have better international reporting—perhaps even more so than improved domestic coverage. At home people can at least see some things for themselves and judge accordingly. Other countries must be seen mainly through reporters' eyes. Let us, then, enter the door to China with the desire to be the kind of communicators we claim to be, and not stoop to the police reporting syndrome that has demeaned our calling for so many years.



**THERE, THERE.** Princess Grace and Prince Rainier of Monaco provide sympathetic ears for comedian Jerry Lewis (left) after his interrupted performance Friday at the opera house in Monte Carlo. Lewis left the stage midway through his act complaining of bad lighting and incompetent stagehands. (UPI)

### Captious caption

—Boston Sunday Globe,  
July 30.

## Notes on the art

### Newspaper offices: off-limits to police searches

■ A decision handed down in San Francisco in October, ruling a 1971 search of the offices of the *Stanford Daily* illegal, has offered journalists a bright spot in an otherwise dismal succession of court rulings limiting press freedoms. Coming three months after the *Caldwell* decision on confidentiality and only a week after a New Jersey reporter was jailed for refusing to testify about unpublished material, the Oct. 5 ruling of District Judge Robert F. Peckham assumes special significance.

Judge Peckham's decision, which is being appealed, states broadly that "law enforcement agencies cannot obtain a warrant to conduct a third-party search [search of a party not suspected of a crime] unless the magistrate has probable cause to believe that a subpoena . . . is impractical." He also holds that newspapers, reporters, and photographers have greater Fourth Amendment protections than other citizens because their right to gather information is protected under the First Amendment.

Significantly, Peckham bases his stand on the Supreme Court's recent controversial *Branzburg-Papavas-Caldwell* decision, emphasizing "the limited nature of the Court's holding" and citing Justice Powell's assurance that the Court does not wish to "'annex' the news media as 'an investigative arm of law enforcement'." The decision was viewed as

a significant victory not only by large media such as the *New York Times* but also by smaller news organizations—the most likely targets of similar searches in the future.

The *Stanford Daily*—a student-run, student-controlled newspaper at Stanford University—has long had tenuous relationships with news sources. Like many university campuses of the late Sixties and early Seventies, Stanford has often been in the grip of a political hurricane—with the *Daily* living uncomfortably in its eye, distrusted by radicals and administrators alike. More than once demonstrators have suggested taking over the *Daily's* offices, and the paper's photographers have been threatened and thrown out of radical meetings and demonstrations. Yet the newspaper managed to establish firm enough relations with radical leaders so that when something big was brewing, a *Daily* reporter was almost always there.

Many were there on April 9, 1971, when some sixty demonstrators barricaded themselves in a wing of the Stanford University Hospital, protesting the firing of a janitor, and fought 175 riot-equipped police and sheriff's deputies. More than thirty-five people were injured, twenty-three were arrested, and the hospital wing was heavily damaged.

Two days later, when the *Daily* published a special edition, including numerous pictures of the violence and its aftermath, law enforcement officials apparently decided that the film taken by the newspaper's photographers could be valuable in prosecuting many of those arrested. Although photographers from at least six other publications were also at the riot, police moved only against the student newspaper—and they acted in the swiftest, if least orthodox, way possible. Armed with a search warrant obtained without prior adversary hearing, four officers of the Palo Alto Police Department entered the offices of the *Daily* late in the afternoon of April 12, and began to dig.

Never before in American history

was a newspaper's office known to have been the subject of a police search for evidence. The implications of such an occurrence, obvious to even a beginning journalism student, were made frighteningly clear to staff members as they watched the police. Desks were opened; papers, personal correspondence, and reporters' confidential notes were read; photographic files were combed; even one staff member's income tax return was scanned.

After an hour, the police left emptyhanded. But the damage had been done. The trust of its sources all but destroyed and its position as an independent newsgathering publication in jeopardy, the *Stanford Daily* went to court. With the aid of Stanford law professor Anthony G. Amsterdam (who also represented Earl Caldwell) and the financial backing of major news media throughout the country, the paper asked the court to rule such searches illegal and restrain the police, district attorneys, and judge who helped issue the warrant from ever doing so again.

In its plea, the newspaper asserted that the search had made potential sources shy from *Daily* reporters and had largely dried up the paper's sources of confidential information. Perhaps more damaging, reporters and editors, living with the possibility of another search, began to impose severe censorship on their work. Record-keeping and filing—routine and necessary for any newspaper—were curtailed for fear that they might lure police back.

After filing the suit in May, 1971, the *Daily* had to wait out a steady stream of procedural motions and delays. But when the Supreme Court handed down its *Caldwell* decision—seeming to limit reporters' rights to confidentiality—the defendants appeared suddenly anxious to proceed with the case. Oral arguments were heard last July and were quickly followed by a motion for summary judgment. In October, the court ruled—for the *Stanford Daily*.

In one sense, Judge Peckham's de-

cision, with its sweeping reaffirmation of the privacy rights of third parties not suspected in a crime, is a considerable victory for all citizens' Fourth Amendment privileges. He places strong emphasis on ensuring third parties—be they in newspaper offices, other places of business, or private homes—the same protections under the law as those already allowed suspects in a crime. Peckham writes:

Unlike one suspected of a crime, the third party has no meaningful remedy or protection against an unlawful search, with or without a warrant, and an additional safeguard is necessary to assure that his Fourth Amendment Rights are not trampled. That protection is the obligation of law enforcement officials to use a subpoena, unless it is shown, through sworn affidavits, that it is impractical to do so.

Peckham suggests several situations in which a subpoena might prove impractical, such as when the destruction of evidence seems imminent despite the issuance of a restraining order. He declares:

Because a search presents an overwhelming threat to the press' ability to gather and disseminate the news, and because "less drastic means" exist to obtain the same information, [use of a search warrant when not absolutely necessary] would be to sneer at all the First Amendment has come to represent in our society. . . .

The First Amendment is *not* superfluous. Numerous cases have held that the First Amendment "modifies" the Fourth Amendment to the extent that extra protections may be required when First Amendment interests are involved. . . .

Because the decision in the *Daily's* case is one of the first to follow *Caldwell*, Peckham's interpretation of the freedoms guaranteed the

press by that Supreme Court opinion offers some consolation to the media whose job it has made more difficult. But most importantly, the first police search of an American newspaper's office was successfully challenged and ruled unconstitutional, at least at the District Court level.

#### FREDERICK MANN FELICITY BARRINGER

Frederick Mann and Felicity Barringer are former editors of the *Stanford Daily*. He now is a free-lance writer living in Cambridge, Mass., and she is a writer for the Harvard News Office who also free-lances.

## The most neglected page?

■ The *Milford Citizen* is a young daily—an outgrowth of a long-established weekly—of about 7,000 circulation in competition with large newspapers that have long "owned" its territory. It has been hard sledding, no matter how inviting our page layouts or how deeply we have covered brouhahas about sewers, zoning, and dog catching, as well as the brides, obituaries, local sports, and other staples of a community-focused newspaper.

I believe, as Lisle Baker of the *Louisville Courier-Journal* first expressed it, in the editorial product as the best promotion. But it was only recently that we discovered the potential of the editorial page.

Our routine on editorials was like that on most small dailies. With the day's paper locked up at 12:30, the editor grabs a hasty lunch at the eating place across the street, comes back to the paper, and threads up his typewriter. By 4:00 he has two editorials done for the next day: a harangue about sewers (most deserved) and perhaps something about roaming dogs.

I am a writer by trade, so I can and do write when I can find time. But the reporter on the education beat who covered last night's board meeting would know a lot more about a school problem than I possibly could. And there is always a lot for me to be doing. (This morning I took the husband of one of our key composing room women to his job because their car was inoperative and we couldn't spare our employee; our bookkeeping expert was ready to analyze why last month's operations seemed so wildly off budget; the composing room foreman wanted to discuss whether to replace or repair some equipment; and there were the questions whether all the circulation trucks needed new snow tires and how much we might raise the advertising rate—just a capsule of one morning's problems that seem to find their way like smart bombs to the publisher's office.)

Then one day we got a book for review. It was by a local author, Louise FitzSimons. It was on John F. Kennedy and was far from a book of adoration. I liked its bitter, informed, knowledgeable style. The writer did not fling a mountain of fact to impress the reader with detailed knowledge, but certainly presented Kennedy in a clear new light. So one morning, with a camera slung over my shoulder, I went to see Miss Louise FitzSimons to do a personality study on our local author.

She turned out to be a tall rangy young woman, dressed in dungaree pants and a loose gray turtleneck sweater. Her bright eyes were perceptive, and her talk responsive and informed. She knew the mechanics of how things happen in congressional committees. She seemed to have a grasp of facts that lurk so elusively behind the conventional Washington news sources of releases and press briefings. I learned she had been a political officer with the Atomic Energy Commission, a staff member



of the U. S. Senate, had a master's in political science, and had studied at the Sorbonne and lived extensively abroad.

So, not being either shy or afraid to talk about what we could afford to pay, I asked her if she would do two or three editorials a week for us and mentioned a minuscule sum. Small dailies do not usually employ an editorial writer *per se* unless it is some nice old man nobody can get up his nerve to fire or suggest retirement to.

"Sure," she said briskly. "I love to shoot my mouth off."

Then followed some editorials that were brilliant, informed—as good as I. F. Stone or Lippmann in his salad days.

I changed the format of the page. We kept Jack Anderson along with Evans and Novak. We kept the letters to the editor, of course, and the Herblock or Grant cartoon. But instead of two anemic editorials we ran one in 12-point Garamond, double-column width. With Louise seeming to turn out her quota each week, the staff suddenly had time to do thoughtful pieces that were concerned with their beats and presented better documented arguments. We had time to talk about them in the office.

For example, there had been a lot of hubbub about the safety of two liquefied natural gas storage tanks. Suppose they had a leak or a tank burst? What would be the danger? People were worried. We took the time to spend half a day going over the installation with the president of the gas company, a consulting engineer, and the construction people. We learned a lot about the behavior of gas at sub-zero temperatures, the coolant (which was nonflammable nitrogen), and the potential contribution to the energy crisis of this extraordinarily efficient storage system. Louise had provided an editorial for the next day, a superb piece on Pentagon projects and how they were manipulated through

committee. We had some time to work on the gas safety problem.

Each week we now have five strong editorials, two on local issues from the staff and three from Louise on the national scene. This instead of ten weakling efforts, somewhat meager on fact and rushed through as a routine chore.

I remember with great satisfaction and pride any number of Louise's contributions—one analyzing Kissinger's notable account of his plan for a Vietnam peace, praising its remarkable lucidity, and appreciating Kissinger as a negotiator; or the many times she lamented the twists and turns in McGovern's position; or an exploration of the dilemma in which some found themselves in supporting a candidate who countenanced a Watergate. These editorials were talked about. I got hell at the local Rotary Club for lashing into Nixon and hell from my liberal friends for asking McGovern to get in focus.

Now let's be frank. A small newspaper has a status in the community that ranks with, but after, morticians. We're one of the businesses in town. But now I sense an increasing respect, even an eagerness to read the product of today's 16-inch gun.

In the last few months we have had a circulation drive. We expect a normal 20 per cent mortality. At the moment, it is less than 7 per cent, and instead of bouncing around at a 5,000 minimum respectability our circulation is now over 7,000 and headed upward. Louise didn't do it all. But the syndicated columnists or the comics or sports didn't do it, either! It is my strong hunch that, without knowing it, people find themselves looking with worry and concern at nearly every segment of our republic. People want facts and reasoned views. They will accept boldness.

For example, Miss FitzSimons did a piece on pensions: how the Senate recently analyzed eighty-seven sets of plans, and in one group with nearly 10 million em-

ployees and \$16 billion in pension assets, only 4 per cent of the employees who had left since 1950 received any pension at all! There is a big betrayal of faith and trust in all this, and government should take a hand with long-needed legislation. A news source may be Washington, but it can have deep local concern for our readers.

The heart of my belief is that no newspaper is "small," unless it is atrophied and complacent. I'll grant that we could lose Louise FitzSimons to the *Washington Post* or one of the syndicates. Her stuff rates it. But three universities, including Yale, are not too far away. You may not think you have a counterpart in your area. But with the proliferation of colleges and universities you might very well chance to find an informed person who would like to "shoot off his mouth" and say it well enough to stand up in 12-point emphasis.

There also is the opportunity of finding in the academic community many varieties of specialized talent which can be the nucleus of an Op Ed page. This is often available at modest cost. We recently had a memorable feature that turned out to be free. Ours is a shoreline town with many ponds and salt marshes, and the recently enacted Connecticut wetlands laws have created much talk and little understanding. The State Audubon Society, however, turned loose experts who made a complete census of bird and animal life and their interaction. We published it—a beautifully documented feature, a sellout of that issue even after a substantial overrun, and still being asked for weeks after its publication.

People in specialized fields often care enormously about the public aspects of their interest, and the newspaper and the community become beneficiaries of this in an exciting way.

**ALFRED STANFORD**

Alfred Stanford is publisher of the Milford, Conn., *Citizen*.



## Books

THE MEGASTATES OF AMERICA: PEOPLE, POLITICS, AND POWER IN THE TEN GREAT STATES. By Neal R. Peirce. W. W. Norton. \$12.95.

THE PACIFIC STATES OF AMERICA: PEOPLE, POLITICS, AND POWER IN THE FIVE PACIFIC BASIN STATES. By Neal R. Peirce. W. W. Norton. \$9.95.

THE MOUNTAIN STATES OF AMERICA: PEOPLE, POLITICS, AND POWER IN THE EIGHT ROCKY MOUNTAIN STATES. By Neal R. Peirce. W. W. Norton. \$9.95.

■ A quarter of a century after *Inside U.S.A.*, Neal R. Peirce, a political scientist-journalist, has retraced the trail of John Gunther and produced a new survey of the condition of the states. As befits a country whose population and wealth have multiplied in the interim, this new "Inside" is not one but a series of books. *The Megastates* covers the ten most populous; the two regional volumes will be followed by others until the entire country is included.

One of the social-political institutions Peirce and Gunther both contemplate is the press. Both are press critics of liberal temperament, but where Gunther is somewhat hit-and-miss, offering extended discussion only of the *Tribune*, then dominant in his native Chicago, Peirce is systematic. He considers both changes in older media and the newer organizations; in San Francisco, for example, he mentions both the *Bay Guardian*, the muckraking paper, and KQED, the outstanding public television station. Despite these differences, it is possible to offer a few comparative opinions, separated by twenty-five years:

### Chicago Tribune:

GUNTHER (p. 359): "It is, like Russia, big totalitarian, successful, dominated by one man as of the moment, suspicious of outsiders, cranky, and with great natural resources not fully developed; it has a strong nationalist streak, a disciplined body of workers, a fixed addition to dogma, hatred of such assorted phenomena as the idle rich, the British, and crooked bourgeois politics. . . ."

PEIRCE ("Megastates," p. 379): "The *Tribune* is still there, and doing very nicely, thank you . . . ; its conservative, Republican way of looking at the world doubtless continues to influence millions of Midwesterners. But the winds of change have enveloped the Tribune Tower, and the mighty clout is gone. Fewer and fewer people read the *Tribune*, even as the population rises. . . . [C]hanges can be

attributed to a post-McCormick generation of editors now coming to power; they are no flaming liberals, but less erratic, far more responsible than their predecessors."

### Los Angeles Times:

GUNTHER (p. 40): "bitterly anti-New Deal and antilabor . . . a heavy standpat force. . . ."

PEIRCE ("Megastates," p. 671): "competes closely with other great dailies . . . for the honor of being considered the finest in the U.S.A. . . ."

### San Francisco Chronicle:

GUNTHER (p. 40): "best paper in the state, by far. . . ."

PEIRCE ("Megastates," p. 635): "The political tone is superficially liberal, but two-minute stories, breezy headlines, and lots of sex are . . . what most readers remember."

### Denver Post:

GUNTHER (p. 225): "in the process of rebirth. This was for many years the most lunatic paper in the United States, as well as one of the most conservative. Its front page looked like a confused and bloody railway accident."

PEIRCE ("Mountain States," p. 32): "[Palmer] Hoyt changed the paper beyond description. Where it had been isolationist, it became internationalist; where it had been closed to every new idea, it became a breeding ground of new approaches for the city and state. . . . Ironically, the *Post* became markedly more conservative as soon as Hoyt retired."

MEDIA POWER: WHO IS SHAPING YOUR PICTURE OF THE WORLD? By Robert Stein. Houghton Mifflin. \$6.95.

■ Robert Stein, who comes from a mixed media background but has been known primarily as a magazine editor, offers here an extended essay on two propositions: first, that the mass media "have a new kind of power over us all"; and, second, that the power consists in manufacturing rather than simply reflecting the images that are central to our culture. He is chiefly concerned with the quality, and the barriers to fidelity, in the images produced.

The discussion is refreshing, for it avoids the deadly traps of political aggressiveness or professional defensiveness that have marred many recent critiques. Stein appears to be an unaffiliated moralist, and indeed insists that the most critical questions journalists face "are neither political nor professional but moral." One of the best ex-

emplary chapters is that on the difficulty of finding the true loci of venality or cowardice in corporate journalism; he concludes that the system produces self-deception that is endemic.

Journalism, he says, is a reluctant engine of social redemption: "It is too much to ask media people not only to report American reality but to hold it together." Yet journalists are stuck with that largely thankless task, and to persist in it will have to rely on the strength of their own values: "The important issues . . . involve not what outsiders do to media people but what they do to themselves, consciously or not. While they resist political control, many submit to various forms of voluntary enslavement—to competition and deadlines, to their own ambitions and anxieties and, most of all, to narrow professional standards that obscure the human implications of their work. If freedom of the press ever disappears in America, it will not be with a bang but a whimper."

Well said. And a great deal else is also well said in *Media Power*.

(NOTE: "The Excesses of Checkbook Journalism," based on a section of "Media Power," appeared in "CJR" 's Sept./Oct. issue.)

LIPPMANN, LIBERTY, AND THE PRESS. By John Luskin. University of Alabama Press. \$7.95.

■ The sixty-year career in journalism of Walter Lippmann contains raw material for a good many books, of which a few have already been written. With his papers at Yale still sealed from the eyes of researchers, it is doubtful that it is time yet to try any kind of definitive work on his whole lifetime. But, using mostly published sources, John Luskin has made the attempt to survey Lippmann's life, work, and times to 1970.

Being scholarly in intent and accurate enough as far as it goes, Luskin's work will no doubt qualify for its spot in future bibliographies. Yet it leaves the reader wondering precisely why it was written. The author nowhere explains what he wants to do, but simply plunges into his narrative. As he follows Lippmann out of Harvard, to the *New Republic*, to the *World*, and to national fame with his "Today and Tomorrow" column,

the themes go in and out of focus. At times the object appears to be simple biography; at times, to compile Lippmann's reflections on the press (a body of writing deserving separate treatment); at times, to tour Lippmann's opinions on public affairs in general; and, occasionally, to offer a critique based on the work of contemporaries who found fault with him. Possibly this sounds as if it ought to add up to a study of Lippmann the journalist, but somehow it does not; it remains a chronological presentation of fragments.

THE MEANING OF FREEDOM OF SPEECH: FIRST AMENDMENT FREEDOMS FROM WILSON TO FDR. By Paul L. Murphy. Greenwood. \$14.50.

■ The Twenties were an era of great chill and slow thaw in First Amendment rights, when civil libertarians tried to counter the repressive effects of World War I and the Red Scare on dissent in this country. Paul L. Murphy, a professor of history and American studies at Minnesota, has assembled an elaborate study of the free speech-fearing culture of that time, drawing generously on the press for examples that are, sadly, on both sides of free-speech controversies. Most notably, the *World* took the libertarian position while the *New York Times* opposed it. After laying the cultural foundation that, he asserts, determines legal positions in the long run, Murphy devotes the final portions to a constitutional discussion in which he restores the 1931 Supreme Court decision in *Near v. Minnesota*, which struck down prior restraint by local authorities, to its landmark status. It is curious that the *Times*, which did so little to prepare the way for this decision, found it vital forty years later in arguing for its decision to publish the Pentagon Papers.

THE CLOCKS OF COLUMBUS: THE LITERARY CAREER OF JAMES THURBER. By Charles S. Holmes. Atheneum. \$10.

■ A heavyweight study of James Thurber—and this one is a full-scale work of scholarship—might pose the danger of crushing Thurber's fragile talents beneath it. But Charles S. Holmes, an English professor at Pomona College and, like Thurber, an Ohioan by birth, adopted a strategy of riding along with Thurber rather than riding on

him. As a result, Thurber's life and works survive here largely on Thurberian terms.

Journalists will find especially engaging the account of his pre-celebrity days: his childhood in Columbus (the title comes from Thurber's confession, at fifty-eight, that "the clocks that strike in my dreams are often the clocks of Columbus"); his emergence as a campus man of letters at Ohio State; his baptism as a reporter on the Columbus *Dispatch* (from which came his immortalization, in *The Thurber Album*, of his editor, Norman Kuehner); his fling with the Paris edition of the *Chicago Tribune*; and at last the emergence of his particular writing and drawing skills at the young *New Yorker*. The book may deal with a humorist, but it is nonetheless often somber, for both Thurber's life, with his dependence on the one faltering eye that separated him from blindness, and his work, with its understated desperation, were far from mere jollity.

PRINT, IMAGE AND SOUND: ESSAYS ON MEDIA. Edited by John Gordon Burke. American Library Association. \$6.95.

■ This collection of reprints from *American Libraries*, the bulletin of the American Library Assn., covers in broad strokes many media: James Ridgeway on the New Journalism, Charles T. Samuels on film, John Burks on rock, Fred Ferretti on ETV, and Len Fulton on little magazines. Each article has an extensive supplement listing available material in the field.

MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE, PHOTOJOURNALIST. By Theodore M. Brown. Andrew Dickson White Museum of Art, Cornell University. \$7.50.

■ A product of a retrospective exhibit at Cornell University, this volume is a handsome tribute to a journalist whose skill and nerve were legendary: "she photographed Manhattan from the top of skyscrapers in winds so strong that three men were needed to hold her tripod, was ambushed by guerrillas in Korea, was arrested in a Moslem temple for photographing during a service, was aboard a troopship which was torpedoed off the coast of Africa, learned to ride a camel in Syria, sea-ditched in a helicopter, was stranded for days

in the Arctic, flew a combat mission in World War II, was accused of espionage and forced to spend some time in a German jail during the early Thirties, had five proposals of marriage during a 1930 trip through the Soviet Union, worked in forty-five countries, traveled a million miles. . . ." And, besides, took great photographs. The account of her life here is detailed and understanding; the display of her work is striking and generous, produced from uncropped new prints made from original negatives.

POLLS: THEIR USE AND MISUSE IN POLITICS. By Charles W. Roll, Jr., and Albert H. Cantril. Basic Books. \$6.95.

■ Polls and reports on polls occupied in 1972 a bigger share than ever of pre-election news. So another book on the subject, following closely on Leo Bogart's *Silent Politics* [see *CJR*, Nov./Dec.], is not superfluous, particularly when it is a direct, terse laymen's guide like this one. Roll and Cantril, the one president of his own polling organization, the other an independent research consultant, evince a basic faith in the worth of polls competently and honestly executed, but they are bluntly honest about lapses and abuses by politicians and the press. One of the most interesting portions is their precise answer to a process outsiders regard as a great mystery—just how it is that a poll of a nation or state comes to settle on its select few interviewees in a particular set of locations. Instead of making vague comparisons to marbles in a barrel, Roll and Cantril actually work with real population figures and Nebraska state and local maps to draw a sample. This is but one instance of the book's concreteness, a virtue in discussing a process often treated as Delphic.

THE LEFT BANK REVISITED: SELECTIONS FROM THE PARIS TRIBUNE 1917-1934. Edited by Hugh Ford; foreword by Matthew Josephson. Pennsylvania State University Press. \$12.50.

■ To prevent confusion, let it be noted at once that the *Paris Tribune* under study here is not the *Herald Tribune* still published in Paris; rather, it is the European edition of the *Chicago Tribune*, started by Col. McCormick for the AEF and main-

tained as the "country newspaper" of the Left Bank until the Depression killed it in 1934. Hugh Ford, a professor of English at Trenton State College, has combed the files for chronicles of the Lost Generation and sets forth here his generous findings. The book has many a famous byline—Maxwell Bodenheim, Harold E. Stearns, Eugene Jolas, Ezra Pound, William L. Shirer, George Seldes, George Antheil, Vincent Sheehan, Kay Boyle—represented in items that have been largely lost or forgotten (as, alas, a few of them deserve to be). The value of the collection is enhanced by contemporary sketches and by recollections written for the book by six former staff members.

JAMES BOYLAN

THE AMERICAN NEWSREEL, 1911-1967. By Raymond Fielding. University of Oklahoma Press. \$9.95.

■ This could have been a great book. Certainly this version of Fielding's Ph.D. dissertation is an extremely thorough, almost encyclopedic overview of a neglected yet vitally important aspect of American journalism: Prior to television the newsreel provided the vast majority of Americans with their most graphic visual impressions of people, places, and events.

Fielding, a professor in the School of Communications and Theatre of Temple University, has on the whole performed his task splendidly. Indeed, the dates in the title belie the breadth of his study. The first fifth of it deals with the period before 1911 and perceptively discusses the "actualities" and primitive newsfilms which made up much of the movie programs of that era. The book's many illustrations are well chosen and intelligently captioned. Fielding, whose Master's essay on the early years of the *March of Time* deserves to rank as the last word on the subject, seems to have read almost everything ever published on the newsreel, and his bibliography serves as an excellent guide to anyone who wishes to dig deeper into aspects of this genre of film.

For all the book's good qualities, however, some caveats must be noted. Fielding made use almost exclusively of published sources. He did not delve into records of the companies which

produced or distributed newsreels. Presumably this reliance on the published record reflects an unwillingness by these companies to make such materials available (a reluctance unfortunately shared by many other companies in the electronic and print media industry). While Fielding's text is said to reflect interviews with "many motion picture pioneers," none is listed either in the text or the notes and bibliography. Moreover, there are some infelicities: the impression is given, for example (p. 135) that the Tacoma bridge which swayed to destruction in 1940 did so before the advent of sound (at the end of the 1920s). And there are some factual errors, such as placing Upton Sinclair's 1934 campaign for the California governorship in 1936 (p. 268).

But for me the major drawback stems from Fielding's overall attitude toward the newsreel. His study, as he points out in the preface, "is noticeably hostile in its indictment." There is no gainsaying his arguments that newsreels devoted much of their coverage to trivial subjects, that distributors all too often complacently accepted censorship, and that producers falsified or recreated considerable footage over the years. These points notwithstanding, Fielding overstates when he concludes that "the newsreel never really bloomed at all. Like some species of the hardy cactus plant—it had simply survived, barely sustaining itself . . . a symbiotic marvel. . . ."

In my research into the 1937 Memorial Day "Massacre" during which Chicago police fired into a CIO group attempting to picket a struck steel mill, I was amazed to discover that the opening shots of the newsreel were not of the Chicago mill but of one in Pennsylvania. Yet this does not obscure the importance or vividness of the footage filmed on the spot during the melee. And as Fielding's book points out, the newsreels covered not only this clash but numerous others, as well as many events of a different but equally newsworthy nature. Whatever else one may say about the newsreels, they gave the moviegoer an exciting glimpse of the world not equalled until television captured the audience.

DANIEL J. LEAB



## Unfinished business

### Chain ownership

#### TO THE REVIEW:

The article "The Rush to Chain Ownership," by Robert L. Bishop [Nov./Dec.], contains three factual errors pertaining to Cowles Communications, Inc.

1) As stated, John Cowles does share ownership with his brother, Gardner Cowles, of the Des Moines *Register and Tribune* (and with his other brother, Russell, and with his sisters and their families), but the Des Moines *Register and Tribune* does not "operate a radio-TV combination in Des Moines, a TV station in Daytona Beach, Fla., and an AM and FM station in Memphis." These operations are owned by Cowles Communications, Inc., a publicly-owned corporation listed on the New York Stock Exchange. The Des Moines *Register and Tribune*, which does own common stock in Cowles Communications, is not considered a "principal stockholder" because its holdings are less than 10 per cent.

2) Gardner Cowles does not own "a 23 per cent interest in the New York Times." Cowles Communications does. Gardner Cowles is a "principal stockholder" in Cowles Communications, owning of record or beneficially 16.4 per cent of the common stock.

3) The bulk of this stock interest in the *Times* was acquired before (April 30, 1971) and not "after *Look's* demise" (Sept. 16, 1971).

In the case of the "Cowles family," a correct statement of corporate and family relationships obviously does not invalidate Mr. Bishop's contention that relationships exist, but it does suggest the potential for influence is more diffuse than he implies.

RICHARD S. COLLINS  
Vice President, Director of  
Corporate Relations  
Cowles Communications, Inc.  
New York, N.Y.

#### TO THE REVIEW:

I read Robert L. Bishop's article with considerable interest. When I came to the first of his statements about retained earnings I nearly fell out of my chair. Like most small companies, we are short of capital and when I saw that Gannett had \$118 million in retained earnings "available for cash purchases" I thought I had learned something new.

I immediately called our general manager to tell him I had a use for the retained earnings item on our balance sheet.

He informed me, to my great sorrow, that the only usable retained earnings were those represented in the cash item. The others have long since disappeared into the hands of building contractors, machinery manufacturers, and those from whom we have borrowed money to finance our growth.

Please don't give me any more jolts like that.

ROBERT W. CHANDLER  
Editor  
The Bulletin  
Bend, Ore.

#### TO THE REVIEW:

It is ironic that a Honolulu resident would write an article on "What Happens When a Chain Owner Arrives" ["The New Press Critics," Nov./Dec.] which is critical of the Honolulu *Star-Bulletin's* new ownership.

I say "ironic" because when the *Star-Bulletin Co.* purchased the Huntington, W. Va., Publishing Company in January, 1971, many of the cutbacks the writer, Denby Fawcett, mentions were forced on us by the *Star-Bulletin Co.* itself. Out went such features as "Goren on Bridge" and in came a thing called "The Aces," without so much as asking the editors their opinions.

In came reams of *Star-Bulletin* copy with orders that it be run. I recall all too well having to change the layout of our Sunday magazine in order to get in, for three weeks running, an overwritten series on Micronesia. There were other orders without discussion—gimmick up the ears of the logotypes, ban the use of

borders and boxes—and many things too numerous and, really, too small to mention.

I do not know what happened in Honolulu when, as Ms. Fawcett puts it, "a chain owner arrives", but I do know what happened in Huntington when that same owner—Gannett—arrived. After a short period, a new publisher came in. And after that, here are just a few of the things which took place:

Virtually every member of the news staff got a pay raise. A three-year-old negotiation between management and the composing room was settled, with workers there getting not only pay raises but three years' back pay. The newsroom, a dull, dingy place to work, was completely renovated with paneling, carpeting, and new desks.

Reporters were given a new voice in policymaking. First, by replying to the publisher's written query: "What changes need to be made around here?" Second, through a suggestion box pipeline that got surprisingly quick results. Third, by alternating as members of the company's editorial board. And fourth, by being permitted to have a hand in selecting their own bosses. Their advice was sought when managing editors of both the morning *Herald-Dispatch* and the evening *Huntington Advertiser* were selected. And reporters on the *Advertiser* chose their own news editor by doing all the interviewing and making the final selection from a number of applicants.

Advertising salesmen were put on commission as well as salary, and every one has increased his income substantially in every pay period since. Columnists and reporters in guest columns were permitted to disagree in print with editorials in their own papers, and with the publisher's Sunday column. Weekly staff conferences were set up to open new lines of internal communication. From the publisher's operating group meetings through these staff meetings, information previously considered "top secret" to the employees is now given them. Discussion—even debate—is encouraged.

The two papers were declared independent, not politically partisan, as had been the case for so these

many years. Both were urged to do investigative reporting, to go after the truth even if it might damage some previously "untouchable" community leader (a far, far cry from pre-Gannett days). New channels of communication were opened with the city's minority groups, particularly its blacks.

The company is providing more leadership in the community—donating money toward the establishment of a medical school, providing free bus service for a full day in a celebration to open the Christmas shopping season, and working closely with the Chamber of Commerce and various groups to revitalize the city.

"What happens when a chain owner arrives?" If it's Gannett, and if we're any example, things get a hell of a lot better.

C. DONALD HATFIELD  
Managing Editor  
Huntington (W.Va.) Advertiser

### Endorsements and 'Newsday'

#### TO THE REVIEW:

In your editorial comment on *Newsday's* policy of non-endorsement of political candidates [Nov./Dec.] you raise the question whether local candidates "will remain not only unendorsed but unknown." Your concern was needless.

Our total coverage of the campaign was more complete than it has ever been. In addition to our usually extensive national report, we ran more column inches on local races than ever before. This included seventy full pages in a question-and-answer format in which congressional and legislative candidates presented their views on major issues in their own words. And nonendorsement did not mean nonopinion. We ran vigorous and strong editorials on the issues.

The climax to our coverage was a Voters Guide that gave the most comprehensive compilation of election information that we have ever provided. It was twenty-four pages, carried no advertising, and summarized our editorial positions.

The only Long Islanders who were ignorant of the details of this year's election were the few who did not read us.

STANLEY ASIMOV  
Assistant Publisher  
Newsday  
Garden City, N.Y.

### Minneapolis dissents

#### TO THE REVIEW:

Your Nov./Dec. issue includes a reprint of a criticism of the *Minneapolis Star* which appeared in the *Twin Cities Journalism Review (TCJR)* of last February, without reference to the rebuttal by our reporters in the April/May *TCJR*.

The criticism was that when the *Star* "had something good to say about two big advertisers, it mentioned them by name, but when the story was adverse, names were omitted." The three reporters who wrote the piece in question—Sue Hovik, James Shoop, and Dave Nimmer—replied in a letter which was published in the April/May *TCJR*, saying, in part, the decision "was entirely our own doing . . . the three of us decided the names of the stores were not that important to our story, the main point of which was to tell what was wrong with *manufacturers'* warranties. We did mention the names of many brand manufacturers during the story. . . . We are proud of the *Star* editors for their courage and support during the entire Your Dollar's Worth consumer series. Not once have we heard a squeak from the ad department. Not once has an editor suggested we 'go easy' on an advertiser."

Your reprint of the criticism is all the more perplexing in view of the Laurel given the *Star* in your March/April issue for a consumer report on impurities found in hamburger. "In each case," *CJR* said, "the seller was identified by name and address." We need remind no one in the newspaper business of the importance of food advertising.

ROBERT C. KING  
Editor  
Minneapolis Star

### Publishing local reviews

#### TO THE REVIEW:

Marty Coren's comments that the *St. Louis Journalism Review* publishes most articles without a byline are correct ["The Perils of Publishing Journalism Reviews," Nov./Dec.], although he failed to mention that all nineteen members of the *SJR* editorial board who contribute all of the unsigned copy are listed in the masthead of each issue. In a way, they become collectively responsible for the total issue and not just the one article they may have authored. Depending upon your point of view, this may dilute or broaden responsibility.

Secondly, the article implies that the *SJR* has a new policy which offers management an opportunity to comment. Management has always had this opportunity, but has avoided using the *Review* for rebuttal in spite of our repeated invitations.

We have found it a matter of common sense to let writers comment on the "other" local daily in most cases, rather than their own—another practice from the start.

Our board is completely open (any working journalist in the St. Louis metropolitan area can join by walking in the door), and in spite of philosophical differences among its board members there is a surprising harmony and agreement on the dismal state of the St. Louis media.

CHARLES L. KLOTZER  
For the Board  
St. Louis Journalism Review

### That Dayton series

#### TO THE REVIEW:

We at the *Journal Herald* read with considerable interest your item "Indiana Papers, Please Copy" [PASSING COMMENT, Sept./Oct.]. We are grateful for the generous attention you gave our effort.

We would stop short of accepting implied claims [UNFINISHED BUSINESS, Nov./Dec.] that our eleven-part series did not go beyond the specifics and scope of earlier work. However,

there is a possibility that a misimpression may have been created that Indiana papers generally ignored the story. To the contrary, the AP chief in Indianapolis reported to us several days after the condensation began to be carried on the Indiana wire that newspaper usage outside the capital was as great as for any story in his memory.

There was also an inference to be drawn that papers in South Bend, Kokomo, and Evansville received from us copies of the entire series, but did not use it for nefarious reasons. In providing copies to papers in those cities we asked that they not appreciably cut it if they decided to use it. Under those conditions, they found publication of our version unmanageable. The AP version was used, however, in all three cities. But in Evansville the series was run by the opposition paper, since the paper to whom we offered it was not an AP member.

CHARLES ALEXANDER  
Editor  
Dayton (O.) Journal Herald

## AP and 'Caldwell'

### TO THE REVIEW:

As the Associated Press' correspondent at the Supreme Court, I would quarrel with both the judgments and the facts in Norman Isaacs' appraisal of press treatment of the Supreme Court decisions in the Caldwell-Branzburg-Pappas cases ["There May Be Worse to Come from This Court," Sept./Oct.].

It appears to be axiomatic with Mr. Isaacs and other commentators that the quality of newspaper coverage of any event is inversely proportional to how much they use the wire services. The theory: the more a paper uses AP, the weaker the paper and the less complete the information relayed to the reader.

This is nonsense. AP frequently outreports and outwrites the newspapers all over this town. When telegraph and news editors "slavishly" follow the wires they may be doing their readers a favor.

Isaacs writes that the AP skimmed when it provided 450 words on the decisions on the main trunk wire

and an additional 360 words on the supplementary "B" wire. What he is writing about is the "night lead." Two hours earlier, AP transmitted, on a bulletin and urgent basis, a 470-word story on the decisions on its main trunk.

The same day, AP also moved about 500 words on the related Mike Gravel-Pentagon Papers case. And AP dutifully and completely covered the cases as they had progressed in the Court.

Isaacs' allegations of "poor coverage" by AP are simply off base.

By the way, the *Wall Street Journal*, whose Court man is an exceptional reporter, was not alone a year earlier in pointing out disquieting aspects of the decision in the Pentagon Papers case. AP's analytical overnight was pegged to exactly this point. It began:

The 6-3 Supreme Court decision favoring freedom of the press over government secrecy was the product of something less than absolute faith in the First Amendment. But for the reluctant concurrence of two swing men, Justices Potter Stewart and Byron R. White, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* likely would have had to delay further their series. . . .

Later:

What does the decision portend? Immediately, of course, that the *Times*, the *Post*, and the other newspapers who have fenced with the government over the Pentagon Papers may publish without restraint.

But, significantly, the make-shift majority was together only on this case itself, not on any broad "landmark" proposition. There is no assurance Stewart or White, particularly, would find the "facts" running against the Government in a different instance of publication of classified material.

The two justices invited Congress, meanwhile, to consider enacting specific laws to authorize the sort of civil proceedings brought by the Justice Department against the

*Times*, the *Post*, the *Boston Globe* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

The subject, in sum, was not treated casually. In fact, much fuller coverage might have carried AP to the point where someone other than a journalist could justifiably accuse us of overkill.

BARRY SCHWEID  
Associated Press  
Washington, D.C.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Isaacs comments, "I wrote that my information about AP and UPI coverage came from those agencies' top news executives. I reported faithfully what AP Managing Editor Rene Cappon said: 'While you're distributing cuffs, throw one in our direction.' I reiterate what I tell all editors: Defensive-ness is our worst trait. On that I rest."

## Newsroom noise

### TO THE REVIEW:

You awarded a laurel [Sept./Oct.] to United Press International and the Wire Service Guild for a letter appended to their new contract to "improve office conditions and cut down noise." I believe a similar letter accompanied the old contract which expired in March.

It is to be hoped that something will come of this effort. Many of AP's and UPI's offices are set up so newsmen are surrounded by teletype machines.

ERIC WEISS  
Brentwood, Mo.

## Sic semper 'Hard Times'

### TO THE REVIEW:

Thanks for the kind mention of our media commentary column [PASSING COMMENT, July/Aug.]. For the record, you should note that the also-mentioned Albuquerque *Hard Times* has folded.

MARK ACUFF  
Co-publisher  
Independent Newspapers  
Albuquerque, N.M.

## REPORT ON REPORTS

### Summaries and reviews of current literature on the media

"The 'Uninhibited, Robust, and Wide-Open' First Amendment: From 'Sullivan' to the Pentagon Papers," by Alexander M. Bickel, *Commentary*, November, 1972; "Libel Law Since New York Times v. Sullivan," by Frederic C. Coonradt, Pamphlet, University of California at Los Angeles.

Two discerning overviews of the law of the First Amendment, by the Chancellor Kent Professor of Law at Yale and by a UCLA journalism professor.

"Freedom of the Press," Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights of the Committee on the Judiciary of the U.S. Senate, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972.

Complete transcripts of 1971 and 1972 testimony in the significant and informative freedom-of-the-press hearings conducted by Sen. Sam J. Ervin, Jr.

"Public Broadcasting Must Clean House," by Dr. John C. Schwarzwald, *TV Guide*, Sept. 30, 1972; "In Defense of Public Television," by Jim Karayn, *Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 15, 1972.

An accusation of excessive liberalism in public TV, by the executive vice president of KCTA in Minneapolis-St. Paul, and the opposition case by the president of the National Public Affairs Center for Television.

"This is Howard Cosell . . .," *Newsweek*, Oct. 2, 1972; "Heeded Words: Ada Louise Huxtable Has Formidable Power as Architecture Critic," *Wall Street Journal*, by Stephen Grover, Nov. 7, 1972; "Loeb . . . His Strong Personality Is Imprinted on His Newspaper," by Tom Muller, Editor & Publisher, Sept. 2, 1972; "Dan Dorfman: King of the Wall Street Skeptics," by Richard Blodgett, *Corporate Communications Report*, June, 1972.

A dispassionate view of "sportscaster-cum advocate" Cosell; a *Journal* staff reporter's incisive profile of New York Times architecture critic Huxtable; an interesting but somewhat one-sided sketch of Manchester Union Leader publisher William Loeb, by an employee; and editor Blodgett's report on *Wall Street Journal* columnist Dorfman.

"Journalism and Student Publications in American Junior Colleges," by Dr. Frank Deaver.

A useful directory of programs and personnel by a University of Alabama journalism professor.

"Memo To Vice President Spiro T. Agnew: 'There Is No Eastern Intellectual Elite; There Is No Eastern Liberal Press,'" by Fred J. Cook (with comments by Emile de Antonio, Bernard Fensterwald Jr., J. W. Fulbright and Sidney Hook), *Lithopinion*, Summer, 1972.

With support from all the commentators but Hook, a veteran journalist sharply attacks the press and intellectuals "whose influence the Vice President so distorts."

"Where Are You Now, PM Spinney?" by J. Anthony Lukas, *New Republic*, Sept. 9, 1972.

A sentimental but discerning overview of the defunct New York newspaper *PM* by a former New York Times correspondent, who argues that many of the "current trends" in the press such as consumer reporting and media criticism "can be traced back, at least initially, to *PM*."

"Political Ads: American Dilemma," by Dennis L. Wilcox, Freedom of Information Center Report No. 287, August, 1972, School of Journalism, University of Missouri at Columbia.

Wilcox, a Ph.D. candidate in journalism, perceptively summarizes recent comment on media advertising by political office seekers.

"Press Councils," by C. Donald Peterson, Professional Standards: A Report by the APME Professional Standards Committee, November, 1972.

A useful if somewhat one-sided report on the Minnesota Press Council by its chairman.

"A Radio Station with Real Hair, Sweat, and Body Odor," by Susan Braudy, *New York Times Magazine*, Sept. 17, 1972.

A freelance journalist's fascinating description of the personalities and programming at WBAI-FM, "the countercultural, listener-sponsored radio station" in New York.

"Gallery Interview: Jack Anderson," *Gallery*, November, 1972; "Playboy Interview: Jack Anderson," *Playboy*, November, 1972.

Two interviews illuminate Anderson's motivations and the principles that govern his column.

"Can the Star-News Survive?" by Joseph C. Goulden, the *Washingtonian Magazine*, October, 1972.

A first-rate report by author-critic Goulden "autopsies" the Washington *Daily News* and dissects "its hyphenated successor."

DANIEL J. LEAB



the lower case

## Woman Dies In 1 Of 2 Fires

—Newport News, Va.,  
Times Herald, Oct. 31.

## Pope Beautifies Nun

—Worcester, Mass.,  
Evening Gazette, Nov. 13.

## Area Women Were United in Marriage Saturday

—Hartford, Conn.,  
Courant, Oct. 22.

circulation paper.

Media General bought the News in 1970 from the ancestors of one of the paper's founders, Wallace M. Scudder. The paper was started September 1, 1883 and in 1903

—Editor & Publisher,  
Sept. 2.

HOUSTON-2884 0,89 53/- 7-0585 .8,8334 -6 5E-5 7-0585 -,3  
49.-, 1-5E9181 E-33 9.32E8,4 59 53-1E 3-1E 95E34.

THE STATEMENT WAS MADE BY DOCTOR JAMES FLAMMING, PASTOR OF THE

—AP Texas wire,  
Oct. 17.

CORRECTION TO THE FORECAST FOR GREAT FALLS AND VICINITY  
SHOULD READ HIGH TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY 65 TO 70  
THE AND WEDNESDAY WAS LEFT OFF BY MISTAKE

—AP broadcast wire,  
June 18.



ENJOYING HONEYMOON — Mr. and Mrs. Ronald S. Madrid of College Highway, Southampton, seem to be enjoying their recent honeymoon at the Bermudiana Hotel, Bermuda. The

bride, the former Jean Desasureau, is the daughter of Mrs. Frederick Desasureau of 154 Fairview St., Holyoke.

—Holyoke, Mass.,  
Transcript-Telegram, Oct. 27.

## Mal Practice Charges May Be Dropped

—Antigo, Wis.,  
Daily Journal,  
Nov. 15.

News John Chancellor ..... 3  
News Flynn-Daly ..... 7  
after serving a jail term with Aunt  
Bee.

—Chicago Sun-Times,  
Oct. 8.

Dear Friends and Supporters:

Thank you for your efforts in my  
behalf. Win, loose or draw I will  
always be grateful for your help and

—Huntington, W. Va.,  
Advertiser, Nov. 7.

The man was dead but  
was able to tell the officers  
that the two young

—Boston Evening Globe,  
Nov. 8.

tion, might be beginning to respond.

—FRED J. COOK

Mr. Cook is a free lance writer specializing in crime.

—New York Times,  
July 2.

## Second reading

# "Someone must search for the facts . . ."

■ It certainly is true today that the journalist is being assaulted even more frequently than a woman's virtue—fortunately with less drastic results. But, at no time in history has the profession had so many challenges. At no time has the world needed the professional journalist more.

It is the journalist's task to be a clear, cool, objective voice bringing reason to an inflamed and confused world. The strident, partisan voices in today's society contribute heat but no light to a society drowning in problems. They are not in short supply. Someone must make sense out of the heated rhetoric. Someone must search for the facts—all the facts—not just those that fit his point of view, and present them to the public.

There are those within the profession who quibble that no one can be impartial or objective. This makes about as much sense as the ancient religious argument as to how many angels could sit on the head of a pin. Granted that no human can be infallible in any profession. But it makes about as much sense to say a journalist can't be impartial as to argue that a judge can't dispense justice, or that a lawyer can't give a sound defense because he finds a prisoner or client personally obnoxious or a teacher can't teach history because he disagrees with the policies of Winston Churchill. The journalist is just as dedicated to his profession as a doctor, scientist or judge.

**—Wes Gallagher,  
President, Associated Press,  
to 1972 Commencement,  
Franklin College, Franklin, Ind.,  
May 21, 1972.**

